

U.S. unemployment worsens

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. jobless rate climbed to 7.1 per cent in December, its highest rate in almost six years, the U.S. government said Friday, in a report that challenges President George Bush's election-year view to add jobs to a flagging economy. "Unsatisfactory," Mr. Bush said of the report as he arrived back in Washington after a swing through Asia to create more jobs by promoting exports of U.S.-made products. The president promised an ambitious agenda to stimulate the economy quickly. The last time unemployment reached this high was in January 1986, when it was 7.2 per cent. November's jobless rate also was revised upward to 6.9 per cent from 6.8 per cent. The number of jobs outside the farm sector grew by a surprising 31,000 in December, mostly in the government and health sectors. Economists were expecting a 70,000 drop in payrolls.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

U.N.-Iraqi oil sales talks in final session

VIENNA (R) — The final session of three days of talks between Iraqi and U.N. officials aimed at paving the way for the resumption of Iraqi oil exports began on Friday night, a U.N. official said. Officials from both sides spent the day isolating points on which they agreed and those which were still open to negotiation. Minutes of the discussions will be carried back to Baghdad and to the U.N. headquarters in New York for consideration before the two sides meet again. No date or venue has been set for future talks. "At least an hour," a U.N. official said when asked how long the final session might last. It began at 7:10 p.m. (1810 GMT). "We have to agree on the minutes and the points we have to discuss. Sometimes you have to reopen things you thought were settled," the U.N. official said before going into the meeting. The talks, originally due to run for two days, were extended on Thursday for one more day. U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Koif Anan, leading the delegation from the world body, said on Thursday officials from the two sides would eventually be able to reach a compromise on a resumption of Iraqi oil exports, but more talks would be necessary.

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Iran opens embassy in Tajikistan

TEHRAN (R) — Iran has opened an embassy in Tajikistan, the only Farsi-speaking republic of the former Soviet Union, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Friday. Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Maleki opened the mission on Thursday in Dushanbe, capital of the newly independent republic in Central Asia which has no common borders with Iran, it said. IRNA said on Wednesday two poets and a traditional Iranian music band accompanied Mr. Maleki to Dushanbe. Muslim Tajiks speak a form of Persian, Iran's main language. Tehran has opened an embassy in Turkmenistan and upgraded its mission in Azerbaijan to an embassy since last month as part of its efforts to build up links with the six Muslim-populated former Soviet republics.

Moroccan students killed for 20 years

ABAT (R) — A court in the northeast Moroccan town of Oudja jailed 11 Muslim activists for 20 years Friday for the gang murder of a leftist student, lawyers said. The 11 students were also convicted of kidnapping, affray, violence and possessing explosives during violent clashes between Muslim fundamentalists and leftists on the Mohammed I University campus Oudja last October and November. The leftist student was backed to death on Nov. 1. Eleven other students, from Oudja, were jailed for three years each for assault and complicity in the case of seven others, who were tried in their absence, was postponed. The opposing sides fought with knives, bicycle chains and nail-clad clubs. Similar clashes occurred at the university campus in the central city of Fez.

Coroner rejects Maxwell reports

AS PALMAS (R) — The coroner who carried out the first autopsy on media magnate Robert Maxwell has rejected reports that a second post mortem would sign of beating. Carlos Lopez de Lamela, director of the As Palmas Forensic Institute, told reporters he totally rejected any suggestion that Mr. Maxwell had sustained injuries. "It seems as if they are talking about a different corpse, nobody could as a severe bruising," he said Thursday. French magazine L'Espresso reported this week at a second autopsy, carried out by Israeli forensic Mr. Maxwell was shot, found signs of passive bleeding and beating.

Radio reports remains of 2,000 unearthed in Ethiopia

AIROBI (AP) — Skeletons of more than 2,000 people massacred during the 1978 red terror that consolidated the power of Ethiopia's ousted military dictator have been unearthed in central Ethiopia, Addis Ababa radio has reported. The state radio said the remains were discovered during "recent operations" 100 kilometers from Debre Zeit, a town about 300 kilometers north of Addis Ababa, the capital. It did not say why people were being killed in the area. The massacre took place at two sites in Shewa province "during the red terror campaign," the broadcast said. In 1974 revolution that ousted Emperor Haile Selassie was followed by internal power struggles and disputes among the soldiers to take power.

Extend Kurds' safe haven, Archer urges

LAHUDDIN, Iraq (R) — Topping up a week-long tour of northern Iraq, British politician and MP Jeffrey Archer has called for an extension of the Western-backed "safe haven," in northern Iraq to include the key oil city Kirkuk. Kurdish refugees from Iraq were living in terrible conditions and must be allowed to go home without fear of the vengeance, Mr. Archer told others. "Appalling, simply appalling," he called conditions at the Sadeq refugee camp, where tens of thousands of Kurds are still squandering amid old and temporary shelters.

Delegates in Washington; Israel hints at 'procedural' compromise

Combined agency dispatches

AS ARAB DELEGATES arrived in Washington for the next round of bilateral talks with Israel at a breakthrough in a dispute that had blocked serious negotiations during the last round of talks. The negotiator, Eliakim Rubinstein, told reporters after talking on the telephone to Haidar Abdul Shafi, the senior Palestinian delegate, that "we believe we can soon finalise the procedural situation."

The Israeli cabinet secretary provided no details, but Israel is known to be working on a plan that would result in the formation of committees with only a token Jordanian representation.

The last round of talks recessed on Dec. 17 in an unresolved dispute over whether the Palestinians would deal separately with Israel.

The Palestinians are attending the negotiations as part of a joint delegation with Jordan.

"We are going to try to meet on a two-track approach," Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinians, said.

The arrival of the Palestinian and Jordanian delegates set the stage for the negotiations to resume. A senior Israeli diplomat, insisting on anonymity, said his side and the Palestinians both

were willing to meet at the State Department on Sunday.

Syrian and Lebanese delegations arrived Friday.

All delegates to the peace talks have said they wanted to move away from procedural wrangling towards discussion of substantive issues.

Abdul Salam Majali, the chief Jordanian negotiator, said in an arrival statement:

"We are here to continue the efforts toward a just, comprehensive and durable peace, based on international legitimacy as manifested in U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338."

"We believe that the letters of invitation issued by the co-sponsors as well as the understanding which was reached after (U.S.) Secretary (of State James) Baker's eight visits to the Middle East clearly spell out that the negotiations shall proceed along two tracks, Palestinian-Israeli track and Jordanian-Israeli track. So this concept must be kept and not to be changed. Israel should display the goodwill necessary for the peace process to move forward."

"We are here to wage peace. Acts of suppression, deportation, demolition of houses and building of settlements make peace difficult to attain."

Yossi Ben-Aharon, top political adviser to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and the Jewish state's chief negotiator with Syria, told Israeli Radio from Washington that Israeli delegates would wait at least until Wednesday for negotiations to resume.

"We hope very much that the

negotiations with the Jordanian-Palestinian side will enable us to enter a room and sit around a table, like we were supposed to at the start," Mr. Ben-Aharon said.

But he accused the Palestinians of trying to "recruit the Americans to exert pressure on us" by delaying their arrival.

He added: "If the Arab partners would rid themselves of their illusions and euphoria... there is a chance that we can move from the hallway to the room."

Dr. Abdul Shafi was quoted in an interview with the Hebrew-language Hadashot newspaper as saying his team was eager to get talks under way.

"We don't want to be stuck on procedural issues," Dr. Abdul Shafi said. "We want to reach the substantive stage as quickly as possible. We will make every effort, and we hope the other side will do the same."

He said, however, that the Palestinians would continue to insist on negotiating with Israel separately from Jordan.

"No one has the right to grant us or deny us our independent identity," Dr. Abdul Shafi told the newspaper.

Mr. Ben-Aharon, in his interview, renewed Israel's request to move the peace talks to the Middle East. Dr. Abdul Shafi said such a move was not practical unless progress was made in the negotiations.

He suggested that the talks could be moved to Europe if the Israelis insisted on leaving Washington.

Early Israeli election

A minister close to Mr. Shamir

called on Friday for an early general election, a move that could stall Arab-Israeli peace talks.

"I think that for the sake of the country there is room to weigh very seriously early elections. I would advance elections already to... May or June," Police Minister Ronni Milo said. Mr. Shamir must call an election before November. Critics say he could seize on opposition in his fragile coalition by ultra-rightist and religious parties to the peace talks to advance a poll.

The critics say Mr. Shamir's objective is to stall the talks.

Asked whether his call for early elections had Mr. Shamir's blessing, Mr. Milo told Israeli Radio:

"I don't know. He must be asked. But I have no doubt that everything that serves Israel, its basic interests and creates a positive atmosphere among the public will receive the support of the prime minister in the end."

Iran seeks role

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani urged the United Nations on Friday to deal with Israel with the same resolve it displayed against Iraq in the Gulf war and force the Jewish state to revoke its decision to expel Palestinians.

Addressing worshippers after noon prayers, Mr. Rafsanjani welcomed Monday's U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinian activists from the occupied territories.

He said the resolution was "a positive point, and we should thank them for this voting."

But he noted: "You saw to what extent they (Security Council members) went in the case of Iraq" after its Aug. 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait. "The same should apply to Israel," he said.

At stake, Mr. Rafsanjani added, was the credibility of the United Nations. If it failed to force Israel to revoke its decision, then it could no longer be trusted.

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Israeli raid in Lebanon kills 12

NA'AMEH, Lebanon (Agencies) — Twelve people including five women and four children were killed on Friday when Israeli warplanes attacked Palestinian bases south of Beirut, security sources said.

The planes bombed positions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) near Na'amah, 15 kilometers south of Beirut, the sources said.

But two rockets fired by the planes slammed into a nearby shanty town inhabited by bedouin, killing the five women and four children and wounding 10 other people, some seriously, they added.

Security sources said earlier that the Israeli planes, the first to strike in Lebanon this year, killed at least 12 Palestinian fighters and wounded 12.

Palestinian sources said later that three guerrillas were killed and three were wounded in the raid.

Witnesses said the planes destroyed a house and two shops made of corrugated iron and damaged several tents inside the shanty town. Shocked bedouin watched Lebanese army soldiers, who control Na'amah, inspecting the scene of the raid.

"Why?" a bedouin man asked. "We are not military, we have nothing to do with this."

The casualties were rushed to hospitals in Beirut and the mountains to the southeast, the security sources said.

The Damascus-based PFLP-GC, a group opposed to the peace policies of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), is led by Ahmad Jibril. Its bases around the village of Na'amah have been a frequent target for Israeli warplanes and commandos.

An Israeli army spokesman said: "Air force planes today at noon attacked terrorist targets east of Damour... all targets were destroyed and all of our planes returned safely to their bases."

Damour is five kilometres south of Na'amah.

The Israeli spokesman said the targets were at a PFLP-GC base used at a staging post for attacks.

Israeli warplanes struck at guerrillas bases in Lebanon more than 20 times last year, killing 35 people and wounding 150.

Israel says the bases were launching pads for attacks on the Jewish state and its self-proclaimed "security zone" in South Lebanon.

The last attack by planes was on Dec. 17 in the eastern Bekaa Valley and the targets were also PFLP-GC bases. Four people were wounded.

The pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) group said Israeli helicopter gunships shot dead one of its guerrillas in South Lebanon on Wednesday night.

The helicopter fired on a number of Hizbollah fighters near the village of Rashaf, on the edge of the "security zone" after the

guerrillas ambushed an Israeli patrol in the area.

It was not immediately clear what prompted Friday's attack. Israel normally sends its warplanes on bombing missions in Lebanon to avenge attacks against its soldiers of the allied South Lebanon Army (SLA).

The Israelis and their Lebanese militia jointly patrol the "security zone" along the border. They are a frequent target of resistance fighters.

On Thursday, the gunshot body of an Arab was found in South Lebanon by United Nations peacekeepers. Israel Radio said he had been killed in a confrontation with Israeli forces the day before.

The planes struck as Israeli and Arab teams gathered in Washington to resume peace talks on Sunday or Monday.

The talks between Israel and Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians were originally planned for last Tuesday. But they were delayed when the Arabs cancelled travel plans in response to Israel's decision last week to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

The boycott ended after a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli decision. The resolution adopted Monday with U.S. backing also called on Israel to cancel the expulsion decision, refrain for such moves in the future and allow the return of 67 other Palestinians expelled in the past four years.

Settlers scuffle with peace activists

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (Agencies) — Israeli peace activists and residents of a Jewish settlement got into a scuffle Friday when the activists came to protest settler attacks on Palestinian villages.

Dozens of members of the Peace Now movement entered the Beit Al settlement chanting slogans and flinging leaflets. Their noisy arrival led to arguments and punches thrown on both sides.

Angry settlers also attacked some journalists covering the demonstration, but no injuries were reported.

Peace Now spokesman Eran Hayat said the protest was against both settler attacks on Palestinians and government spending on the Jewish enclaves in the occupied territories.

"The settlers are behaving like sheriffs of the territories," said Hayat. He added the government "does not come out against the settlers, they give them the backing to run wild."

In Arab East Jerusalem, meanwhile, about 300 Palestinians held a rally to protest Israel's plans to expel 12 men from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Amal Subban, wife of one of those ordered expelled, urged Palestinian delegates to peace talks in Washington to boycott the negotiations over the planned expulsions.

"Our response to the expulsions of 12 freedom fighters is the stopping of negotiations and the escalation of the intifada," she said.

Subban's husband, journalist Hussein Abdullah Subban, and the others accused of "Israeli incitement" have appealed army orders to expel them. Palestinian negotiators already delayed arriving in Washington to protest the expulsion orders.

In Beit Al, Mr. Hayat said that residents of the settlement near the Palestinian town of Ramallah had carried out some attacks on Arabs.

The peace activists said that the settler rampages were aimed at sabotaging the Washington talks.

The demonstrators also demanded that tax money spent on the settlements be used instead to rehabilitate Israeli slums.

Settler Nataniel Krauss charged that the peace activists' noisy protest disrupted preparations for the sabbath starting at Sundown in Beit Al's 350 families.

"Instead they should sit down and have coffee with us so that they can break the image they have of settlers as fanatic," Mr. Krauss said.

Peace activist Gabi Wexler countered: "I have no dialogue with these people. They are thieves... the government is subsidizing everything for them with my money."

Israel may get below \$10 b

Israel has resigned itself to getting less than the full \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to fund immigration from the former Soviet Union, Israeli newspapers said Friday.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's office declined to comment on the reports which said Israel would accept \$2 billion in loan guarantees for each of the next five years — minus what it invested in the occupied territories.

"The compromise will be based on a proposal by Patrick Leahy... to subtract the sum invested in the occupied territories from \$2

billion to be received each of the next five years," Haaretz newspaper said.

Senator Leahy, a Democrat from the State of Vermont, is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee.

The Jerusalem Post reported the \$2 billion could be reduced to half to account for spending on settlement.

The newspapers said American Jewish leaders had pressed Israel to accept a compromise and refrain from lobbying for the loan guarantees in Congress to avert a head-on collision with Washington.

Congress is expected to review Israel's request, postponed for 120 days in October, at the end of this month or in early February.

Israel sorely needs the guarantees, which cut the cost of borrowing, to settle about one million immigrants expected to arrive by the mid-1990s. Some 400,000 have arrived since 1989.

Though Israel has sworn not to use U.S. aid to boost Jewish settlement, Washington is wary that it helps free other funds for use in the occupied territories.

Kohl worried about former Soviet nuclear arsenals

BONN (Agencies) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl expressed Germany's deep concern about the fate of the former Soviet Union's nuclear and chemical arsenals Friday and urged the new republics to agree to further arms cuts.

He told journalists Germany would aid members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) but insisted they block nuclear and chemical arms know-how from spreading to other states.

Bonn also wants them to agree to cuts in short-range nuclear weapons and conventional forces going beyond those agreed to by the former Soviet Union, he said.

Mr. Kohl indirectly warned Ukraine against building up a large army by saying Bonn would have talks with any republic that planned armed forces larger than its 370,000-man Bundeswehr.

Officials in Kiev have spoken of a 400,000-man force.

"I share the concern of many of our citizens about the enormous number of nuclear weapons on the territory of the former Soviet Union," Mr. Kohl said at a news

conference reviewing Bonn's goals for the new year.

"We expect that our new partners will ratify disarmament treaties that have already been signed and respect them strictly," he said.

"More disarmament steps, especially with short-range nuclear systems and conventional troop strengths, are needed."

"Furthermore, everything must be done reliably to block the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and that means not only nuclear arms but also chemical weapons."

A newspaper reported Friday that Ukraine has refused to hand over thousands of tactical nuclear weapons that it was to have transferred to Russia.

The European, an English-language weekly, based its report on unidentified sources in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and U.S. intelligence.

All nuclear weapons were in the process of being moved into Russian territory and the United States was pleased, the paper

quoted the NATO source as saying. But then the transfer stopped, the source said.

U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said in London on Thursday the break-up of the Soviet Union had greatly increased the danger of nuclear proliferation and the West might be powerless to prevent it happening.

Diplomats in Bonn said Germany had urged NATO to form a working group that would help the CIS states destroy their short-range nuclear weapons and nuclear artillery.

"We have indications that some countries are interested in buying (these weapons)," one said.

A Russian official has said that Libya tried to hire two Russian experts for its nuclear programme. The West fears that Third World nations would try to lure nuclear experts from the collapsed Soviet Union.

The two scientists turned down the jobs and \$2,000-a-month salaries, but they might say yes if

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No sign of reported troop movements in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — A week ahead of a decisive second round of elections in Algeria, newspapers said the future is murkier than ever. Diplomatic sources said they had no evidence to back Islamist reports of large troop movements.

Senior army officers were undoubtedly divided over how to react to the electoral successes of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), one Western military source said.

"But there are no signs that the army plans to intervene," he added.

Algers has been awash with speculation that the armed forces might seek to prevent the FIS winning a parliamentary majority on Jan. 16. The fundamentalists party took 188 of the 232 seats decided in a first round on Dec. 26.

The FIS raised the stakes, on Wednesday when acting leader Abdul Kader Hachani said the armed forces had deployed in strength throughout the country and that the authorities were dragged their feet on the second round of voting.

The newspaper Le Matin, reflecting the mood of uncertainty, asked bluntly in a front-page headline on Thursday, "Will there be a second round?" "All doubts are legitimate."

"It is no exaggeration to say that in the memory of Algeria, we have never seen or lived with a

situation so full of uncertainties," said the independent Al Watan.

Military leaders have never hidden their dislike for the fundamentalists who plan to set up an Islamic state. Pledged to uphold democracy and the constitution, many of them fear the FIS might destroy the very system through which it comes to power.

"I'm sure there are many different opinions within the armed forces — from some, perhaps a small group, for the FIS, to the other extreme," said a diplomatic source.

Action by a "maverick officer" could never be ruled out but there was no evidence to support speculation of a coup, he said.

"I suspect Hachani was floating a balloon, trying to see what the government reaction would be," said another, adding that "wishful thinking for military intervention" appeared to come from those who had forecast that the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) would win the election.

Diplomats and newspapers have said troops moved to positions around the capital last Thursday, a week after the first round.

"I'm sure these, and if there were any other movements, were only precautionary like last time when they were ready for any

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Jalloud says allegations pretext for aggression

ROME (AP) — Libya's second in command charged Friday the United States, Britain and France were trying to use the U.N. Security Council to legitimise a premeditated aggression against Libya.

Major Abdul Salam Jalloud also argued the Security Council has no authority to interfere in a judicial case that does not involve the Libyan government but Libyan citizens accused of bombing American and French jetliners.

The United States, Britain and France want the Security Council to pressure Tripoli into extraditing Libyans charged with destruction of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, and a French UTA jet over Niger.

"By taking the case to the Security Council they are trying to legitimise their premeditated aggression against us," Maj. Jalloud told a news conference.

He said if the question remained one of law, Libya was willing to cooperate in search of a solution. But he said if the allegations were a pretext for aggression, "Libya would resist with all its might and with all the might of the Islamic World in a holy war to defend itself."

"When you push even a little country against the wall, at a certain point it loses its fear," said Maj. Jalloud.

The major, the most powerful man in Libya after Colonel

Muammar Qadhafi, met with journalists on the third day of a trip to win support for Libya. He met with Pope John Paul earlier Friday and was in Algeria on Wednesday and Tunisia on Thursday.

Maj. Jalloud said Libya proposes that a commission of internationally recognised jurists examine the accusations. He said the jurists could decide if the Security Council should be involved and could also rule on the seriousness and impartiality of the American, British and French investigations.

The United States and Britain have charged two suspected Libyan intelligence agents, Lamen Khalifa Fhimani and Abdul Bassem Ali Al Megrahi, with the Dec. 21, 1988 bombing of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, which killed 270 people.

France has charged four-high ranking Libyan officials, including Col. Qadhafi's brother-in-law and a deputy foreign minister, with

Brandt hopes Afghan talks will lead towards peace

BERLIN (AP) — Former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt hopes to contribute to Afghan peace efforts by inviting the country's various factions to a three-day conference later this month, an organizer said Friday.

The communist-style government in Afghanistan has already accepted the invitation for the talks aimed at seeking ways to end the 13-year-old civil war.

Mr. Brandt, well known for his attempts to bridge the gap between poor nations and wealthy ones, also has invited various Afghan rebel leaders and deposed King Zahir Shah.

So far, the conference from Jan. 27-29 has attracted little notice in Germany, primarily because there was no formal announcement.

The Bonn government is not involved with the talks, a spokeswoman said.

"The government naturally is interested in a settlement of the conflict there, but this is not an initiative of the federal government," the spokeswoman added, insisting on anonymity.

Mr. Brandt, the honorary chairman of the leftist oriented Social Democratic Party, is sponsoring the conference along with prominent party member Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski and a party-controlled foundation.

"It's not a big peace conference," said organizer Ruediger Diehl. He said the conference was aimed at "giving the various Afghan groups the opportunity to talk to each other and to talk about how things might go in the future."

"We hope that an ability to talk develops that contributes to some possible movement in the peace process," Mr. Diehl added. "We and the talks 'should be a contribution' in that direction."

Mr. Diehl said more than 40



Willy Brandt.

invitations had been sent out. In addition to the Afghan groups, the United States, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have been invited to send observers.

The conference organizer declined to say who has accepted the invitations and who has not, and said the exact format of the talks had not been determined.

Some people believe the conference, to be held in the Bonn area, could be a springboard for broader, U.N.-sponsored peace talks.

Although the various Afghan factions have had indirect contact for years, they have never met publicly.

The government of President Najibullah accepted the invitation and said it would send Prime Minister Fazel Iqbal Khalilzai as its representative.

"I don't think the conference will find a way out of the problem in two or three days," said Walter Saff, the civil aviation minister in Mr. Najibullah's government. "But this is sort of a test to see if Afghans can sit together at the same table."

Although he has made no announcement, diplomatic sources said they also expect former Afghan King Zahir Shah to attend the conference.

The 77-year-old former king was overthrown by a cousin in 1973 and has been living in Italy ever since. More and more Afghans see him as the only person capable of uniting the fighting factions and restoring peace to this war-devastated country.

As of Thursday, the three moderate rebel leader, Pirs Sayed Ahmad Gili, Sibghatullah Mojaddidi and Naji Mohammad, had not said whether they would attend.

The four fundamentalist rebel leaders have repeatedly rejected any talks with the former king or members of Mr. Najibullah's government or his Watan (Homeland) Party and have promised to keep fighting.

The Mujahideen rebels have been fighting to overthrow pro-Marxist government installed following an April 1978 military coup.

The rebels were armed and financed by the United States, Saudi Arabia and other sympathetic Arab states, while the Kabul government was supported by the former Soviet Union.

Washington and Moscow stopped all military support to their warring clients on Jan. 1, hoping to encourage them to sit down together and negotiate a peaceful settlement.

The United Nations has proposed a five-point plan as the framework for a settlement. It calls for the cutoff of weapons to all sides and a ceasefire followed by wide-ranging talks that could lead to a neutral, transitional government to oversee elections.

A U.N. envoy on Afghanistan plans to hold meetings next week to brief officials on the civil war and discuss prospects for U.N.-mediated talks, a spokeswoman said Thursday.

J.N. Representative Benon Sevan is scheduled to arrive in New York on Monday and meet later in the week with Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and others, said U.N. spokeswoman Nadia Younes.

The United Nations last year offered to organize talks between the Kabul government and the rebels. A Pakistani newspaper, the Nation, reported that talks would begin in late February, but Ms. Younes said there were no immediate plans.

Hopes for the U.N. talks were raised Thursday after President Najibullah accepted the invitation for the proposed conference on Bonn.

U.S. envoy says Cyprus solution possible

ANKARA (R) — A U.S. envoy said on Friday an agreement to settle the longstanding Cyprus dispute was feasible in two months if all the parties showed willing.

"With goodwill and hard work on the part of all the parties in the course of the next two months or so, we ought to have enough material and enough narrowing of differences on key issues to move toward a quadripartite high-level meeting to finish the Cyprus issue," Nelson Ledsky told a news conference.

Mr. Ledsky, the State Department's Cyprus coordinator, said a draft accord could be signed at U.N. headquarters in New York by Turkey, Greece and the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities.

"There is no deadline, no timetable, no pressure, but I think the amount of work to be done can be done in a couple of months' time," he added.

Turkish officials have said little during Mr. Ledsky's visit.

In Wednesday Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin said Turkish and Greek Cypriots would have to make the final decision on any solution, but encouragement from Greece, Turkey, the United States and other interested countries would be helpful.

Last year the United Nations was unable to convene a four-way summit first proposed by President Turgut Ozal.

Mr. Ledsky, in Ankara since Wednesday for talks with Mr. Cetin, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel and opposition leaders, is due to meet Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders in Nicosia from Saturday. He will then go to Athens.

It is his first round of Cyprus talks since Mr. Demirel's coalition government took office in November.

Cyprus has been divided into Turkish and Greek parts since 1974, when Turkish troops took the northern third after a coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece.

Mr. Ledsky said he was trying to assist the U.N.-sponsored process, now supervised by the world body's new secretary general, Boutros Ghali.

"Our goal is a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in which the communities would be politically equal, a federation which each community would accept through separate referenda," he said.

Iraqi Kurds resume contact with Turkey

ANKARA (R) — An Iraqi Kurdish rebel leader has met Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, resuming contacts interrupted by a row over Turkish raids into Iraq.

Wahsen Dizal, a senior official of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), gave Mr. Cetin a message from KDP leader Masoud Barzani and said a KDP permanent representative would return to Ankara.

Mr. Barzani, strangled by a series of Turkish cross-border attacks aimed at Turkish separatist rebel Kurds operating from southern Iraq, withdrew his representative, Sivamano Barzani, in October.

Mr. Dizal, quoted by Anatolian news agency, said the KDP wanted to maintain friendship between Turkey and Iraqi Kurds.

Mr. Barzani had accused Turkey of killing civilians during its cross-border strikes. Ankara denied the charges.

Turkey has vowed to repeat attacks on the separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq if necessary.

More than 3,500 people have died in the PKK's eight-year-old struggle for an independent state in southeast Turkey.

Ankara shunned Iraqi Kurdish rebels until half a million Kurds fled to its borders from the Iraqi army last April after a Kurdish rebellion which followed the Gulf war.

It has since begun a dialogue with the KDP and another Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla group, Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. It has also sent relief supplies to northern Iraq.

Kurdish rebels have decided to reject the Iraqi government's latest terms for lifting the blockade it imposed on Kurdistan 10 weeks ago, a Kurdish leader said.

The Kurds say the government has offered to lift the blockade if the rebels let Iraqi military and security personnel back to rebel-held territory.

"We are rejecting it," Mahmud Osman, chairman of the Kurdistan Socialist Party (KSP), said after a meeting of the Kurdistan Front in the town of Khalki. "It is unacceptable."

The Kurdistan Front, an alliance of eight political parties backed by guerrilla armies, functions as the de facto government in northern Iraq.

Baghdad interrupted fuel and food supplies to Kurdistan and cut off the salaries of government employees there in late October, apparently in an attempt to win Kurdish assent to a draft autonomy agreement.

Kurds queue for days to get petrol and many households are without kerosene for heating in the dead of winter. Some families are doing without meat and milk because food prices have more than doubled.

The autonomy negotiations began soon after the Kurdish rebellion collapsed last year. They have been stalled for months because the Kurds and the government disagree on territory and security arrangements.

The Kurdistan Front will meet again on Sunday to decide on the exact wording of its rejection, from officials said.

Kurdish leaders will spend the rest of this week working on a programme to help northern Iraq's four million Kurds cope with the effects of the blockade, they added.

Iraq mysteriously withdrew troops from large swatches of Kurdistan, including the key cities of Erbil and Sulaimaniyah, in late October. As a result, most of Kurdistan is controlled by Kurds.

U.S. satellite said monitoring Israel's settlement building

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The U.S. government is monitoring Jewish settlement construction in the occupied territories by spy satellite because Israel is not providing the information, an Israeli newspaper reported Friday.

Exact data on settlements will be crucial in the renewed debate on Israel's request for \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees and in Middle East peace talks.

The satellite pictures show that construction in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip more than doubled in 1991, compared to the previous year, the Haaretz daily reported.

Visiting U.S. Senator Phil Gramm was quoted Friday as saying that if the accelerated pace persists, President George Bush will not approve the guarantees, likely meaning Congress will not pass them.

"I've known George Bush for 25 years and there is no subject he feels more adamant about than settlements," Mr. Gramm, a Texas Republican, told the Jerusalem Post.

J.S. policy is that the settlements built on the land that Israel seized in the 1967 Middle East war are an obstacle to peace. The United States backs U.N. resolutions calling for the return of occupied land in exchange for peace.

Israel asked for the guarantees in September, but Congress put off consideration for four months at the request of Mr. Bush, who feared raising the issue then could impede Middle East peace talks.

The U.S. guarantees would help Israel borrow money at favourable rates to help absorb a mass wave of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

One compromise being considered by the Americans is to reduce the money Israel spends per year on settlements in the occupied territories from the annual \$2 billion installment of the loan guarantee, Israeli newspapers reported.

Liberal Israeli legislators, citing housing ministry documents, said this week that since December 1990, Israel has built more than 19,000 housing units on occupied land for \$1.5 billion.

The housing ministry refuses to give figures on construction in the occupied territories. Ministry spokesman Shaya Segal did not return telephone messages Friday.

Chairman said the American used satellites after Israel did not cooperate despite assurances it would provide figures on new settlements. The promises were made when Washington granted \$480 million in loan guarantees last year.

"The satellite pictures prove... that the construction is more than doubled," the writer of the Haaretz article, respected military writer

Deef Schiff, told army radio Friday.

When asked about the satellite monitoring, the spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, Carl Chan, said: "We do not comment on intelligence matters."

Yossi Alhimer, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said he did not know about satellite overflights. He added the United States should "rely on the promise of Mr. Shamir that there is no special building programme in the occupied lands."

Mr. Alhimer acknowledged that the fight for the loan guarantees could be tough. "We know the president is extremely against settlements," he told the Associated Press.

"We are not happy about the possible collapse of possible attitudes and humanitarian assistance," Mr. Alhimer added.

Israeli newspapers have noted that if the United States refuses the loan guarantees or puts conditions on them, it could harm Israel's overall economy.

"An overt act of non-confidence by the Bush administration, and our reasonable (credit) remains intact," wrote analyst Andre Lamas in the Jerusalem Post. "Import finance might become difficult to obtain, with unpleasant effects on the level of economic activity."

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Kuwait to raise salaries by 25%

KUWAIT (R) — Plans to raise government salaries by 25 per cent will cost Kuwait an extra 300 million dinars (\$1 billion) a year, Finance Minister Nasser Abdullah Al-Rodhan was quoted as saying Friday.

Sheikh Rodhan told the newspaper Sawt Al Kuwait the plan, which includes increases in allowances for children and other social welfare payments, would be submitted shortly to the council of ministers for approval.

Since U.S.-led forces drove Iraq out of Kuwait last February,

Kuwait has spent about \$2 billion in back pay for government employees, and compensation for people who stayed in the emirate during the seven months of occupation.

It also wrote off government real estate and consumer loans worth \$4.6 billion. Around \$1.5 billion was spent on support for Kuwaiti families abroad during the occupation.

Kuwait is considering plans to waive electricity and water bills worth 135 million dinars (\$465 million).

Asked if these stations will be allowed to broadcast news if commercial licences were approved, Mr. Mansour replied: "We'll see about that."

"Voice of the People, the Communist Party radio station, joined unnamed official sources Friday as saying the government plans to restrict TV news to Tele-Liban.

"This is an introduction to censorship, to restrictions on freedom of the press," a radio commentator remarked.

The cabinet's decision raises serious doubts about the fate of freedoms and democracy in Lebanon.

The decision appeared to target mainly the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) and Al-Mashreq Television — the two major stations competing with Tele-Liban which broadcast for only seven hours a day.

LBC, which has the biggest audience with its 16 hours of programming daily, was launched in 1982 by the Lebanese Forces, the Christians' main militia, dominated by Maronite Catholics.

Al-Mashreq was founded in 1989 and is operated by leftist and Muslim groups.

Muzzing LBC and Al-Mashreq voids some of the main Lebanese groups of their main propaganda outlets.

The other TV stations are owned by smaller political factions, or business tycoons with political aspirations. These operate for six to seven hours a day and screen international programmes and documentaries, but not news.

Mr. Mansour said Prime Minister Omar Karzani wanted an outright shutdown of all private radio and TV stations, but that Mr. Karzani was hesitant.

In addition to the TV and radio stations, Lebanon has 13 daily newspapers and 17 weekly publications which reflect all shades of thought in the middle East.

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Lebanon moves to silence militia-run media

By Rodaina Kanaana
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — The government has given privately owned television stations a month to legitimise their broadcast operations or face being shut down.

The cabinet decision Thursday was apparently designed to curtail militia influence as President Elias Hrawi's government struggles to restore peace to a country recently fractured by the 1975-1990 civil war.

Most militia have disbanded and handed over their weapons to the army under an Arab League-brokered peace plan. But their parent political factions remain influential and most are at odds with Mr. Hrawi's administration to one degree or another.

Privately owned radio stations, whose status has yet to be determined, interpreted the government decision as an attempt to impose censorship on newscasts produced by the commercial television stations in a country that

traditionally has boasted a free press. These are mostly owned by political groups.

As of Friday morning, anyone seeking to operate a commercial television station should apply for a



EYE-CATCHING DONATION
— Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, who is also the president of the Jordan Eye Bank, Thursday conveyed the condolences of His Majesty King Hussein to Al-Suweileh family over the death of Adel Boulos Suweileh, who donated his two corneas prior to his death to the Eye Bank.

donation of his corneas has restored sight to 19-year-old Oday Obeidat and 24-year-old Yehya Kuteishat, who both underwent the cornea transplant at the University of Jordan this week.

Prince Ra'ad also conveyed the King's condolences to the Abu Ghazaleh family over the death of Mashkoura Hazem Abu Ghazaleh, who also donated her corneas to the bank.



Ms. Mashkoura's cornea will be transplanted to a 12-year-old girl Sunday at the University Hospital.

Prince Ra'ad lauded both the Suweileh and Abu Ghazaleh families for their generous contribution, saying that it reflects their sense of true belonging to this nation and their humanity.

evidence on the solidarity of our one Jordanian family in the bad times as well as the good times," Prince Ra'ad said.

He pointed out that there are some 1,000 citizens waiting to receive corneas. He noted that legal fatwas (rulings) were issued allowing the donation of organs to help save others. The donation of corneas is considered as a running alms tax, he said.

He added that more than 10 families have donated corneas during 1991 and that 20 people benefited from these corneas.

The Suweileh and Abu Ghazaleh families voiced appreciation to the King, who was the first to promise to donate his corneas. Prince Ra'ad then visited the patients who underwent the cornea transplants.

Photo competition entries on display at British Council

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The British Council is displaying the results of an amateur photo competition in which more than 100 people participated.

The entries had to be related to three different categories: Glimpses of Jordan, People and a special category for young photographers under 17.

According to the members of the jury, the overall quality of the photographs was very high on both the technical and artistic levels.

A stunning portrait of a woman in a Jordanian black dress, taken by Jacqueline Vander Velde, a Royal Jordanian hostess, was chosen the "Best Picture in Competition".

The carefully selected jury was Peter Robinson, a professional illustrator currently working with the British Council, Jane Taylor — whose book "High Over Jordan" is very well known — and Adib Arwan, a talented Jordanian photographer who had his own exhibition in November at the British Council.

Among the displayed photographs were very interesting views of Jordan which covered a broad range. They include a Petra Treasury shot from a yet unexplored angle — yes it's still possible — to group of camels and boats in Aqaba. A picture of illuminated shops at night against a hill in the background and a marketplace with numerous boxes of colourful vegetables and fruits received special mentions.

The number of photographs in the competition — about 200 — was "extremely encouraging and almost came as a surprise," said Ruth Hill from the British Council.

Miles Roddis, director of the Council, said that the response from the photographers will most likely lead to more similar events in 1992 and years to come.

The interest shown by amateur photographers is certainly a result of the widespread availability and usage of quality equipment and specialised British and American photo magazines through which amateurs learn and enjoy what has become a major art. All the photographs are on display at the British Council and can be seen until Jan. 13, 1992.

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Polish, Jordanian officials review economic, social and political ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Polish Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Majewski Friday concluded a three-day visit to Jordan and flew to Bahrain on the second leg of his current tour of the region.

Apart from developments in the Middle East and eastern Europe, Mr. Majewski's discussions with Jordanian officials covered mainly trade relations and ways to promote economic cooperation.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that the Polish official had a meeting in Amman Thursday with Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour to discuss trade.

He expressed his government's keenness to join Jordan in launching development schemes in the Kingdom.

Dr. Ensour was quoted by Petra as saying that Jordan has called for an early meeting by the joint Jordanian-Polish committee to coordinate the flow of trade between Poland and Jordan.

The minister stressed Jordan's desire for establishing trade centres for the two countries in Warsaw and Amman and to participate in joint trade exhibitions.

Also Thursday, Mr. Majewski had a meeting with Minister of

Planning Ziyad Fariz with whom he discussed matters related to the adjustment of the balance of trade between Poland and Jordan, which is now in favour of Poland.

Dr. Fariz urged the Polish official to ensure more exports of Jordanian products to his country to achieve this goal. Dr. Fariz also briefed Mr. Majewski on the economic situation in Jordan, prospects for investments and the role of the country's private sector.

Dr. Fariz said that Jordan was struggling to cope with adverse effects to the national economy caused by the return to Jordan of 300,000 Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates from the Gulf region.

Mr. Majewski said that Poland was willing to raise the level of trade exchanges and bolster economic ties with the Kingdom.

Mr. Majewski and his accompanying delegation Thursday met Dr. Husni Shihab, chairman of the Lower House's Foreign Affairs Committee, and several House members to exchange views about the recent political developments in Poland and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Dr. Shihab told the guests that Jordan was keen on promoting cooperation with Poland for the sake of achieving a just and durable peace in the Middle East. He also briefed the Polish officials on the adverse effects on Jordan resulting from the current economic blockade on Iraq and the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Majewski said that his country believes that the Middle East question should be settled on the basis on U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Poland, he said, was willing to host the peace conference in Warsaw and take constructive steps to make the negotiations successful.

Issues related to the democratic process in Poland and Jordan were also reviewed at the meeting, held at the Parliament building.

Mr. Majewski and his delegation Thursday had a meeting with the president and the members of the board of the Jordanian-Polish Friendship Society in Amman. They exchanged views on political, cultural trade and social matters.

Threatened JEPSCO strike delayed; labour minister to mediate, official says

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Workers in the electricity sector have postponed the strike planned for today until next week to give the Labour Ministry an opportunity to solve the dispute between them and the Jordan Electricity Power Company (JEPSCO).

President of the General Union of Electricity Workers Walid Khayyat said that Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti said his ministry was willing to solve the dispute between the workers and the company.

Called by telephone, Mr. Kabarti, who is now on a tour of the Shobak subdistrict, said he would intervene to solve the dispute in the best interest of both the company and the workers.

The labour minister had earlier appointed a council chaired by Adnan Al Tahhan to try to reach a compromise agreement between company management and the workers. But according to a union official this council's meeting will be put off pending the results of the direct management - workers meeting under the labour minister in the upcoming week.

The workers had offered to work for a compromise agreement with management over



Abdul Karim Al Kabarti

their demand for better pay. The workers' union president, Walid Khayyat, said in a statement this past week that although workers demand for improved working conditions and pay had been ignored by the management over the past two months, the workers were ready for a compromise solution.

According to Mr. Khayyat, 1,400 JEPSCO workers received less than JD 100 a month and were demanding more pay plus other benefits like a health scheme. Mr. Khayyat said that the workers' grievances were conveyed to the Labour Ministry, the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions and JEPSCO management in the past two months to no avail.

A statement by JEPSCO management published in Al Dustour Thursday denied that

1,400 workers received less than JD 100 a month in salaries and that JD 107 was the lowest salary offered to the beginners. The statement noted that JEPSCO workers enjoyed a 75 per cent discount on electricity consumption at their homes and were entitled to housing loans reaching up to JD 35,000 payable over 20 years.

Mr. Khayyat said that JEPSCO could improve its revenues by imposing a one fill per kilowatt power consumed by subscribers to help cover the cost of the electrification of the rural regions. He said that such a step was bound to raise JD 1.6 million in revenues every year and meet some of the company's expenses, enabling it to increase salaries.

Mr. Khayyat noted that the management had adamantly refused to discuss the workers' demand over the past months, prompting their union to declare general strike by Jan. 11.

The company statement noted that JEPSCO had sustained JD 3.7 million in losses over the past two years and could not meet the workers demand, which meant paying an extra JD 800,000 a year.

The statement said that the JEPSCO board did not reject the workers demand but decided that they will be reviewed once the company's financial situation has improved.

Training programme plan completed, official says

AMMAN (Petra) — The Institute of Public Administration has finalised its 1992 Training Programmes Plan for government employees and private sector personnel, according to IPA Director General Abdullah Ulayyan.

The plan was based on the findings of a survey of training needs which was conducted during the second half of 1992, Mr. Ulayyan said.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the IPA director said the circulation of the plan to the various ministries and departments at the beginning of this year will help them prepare their own plans, which include their training needs and nominations for the various training courses.

Commenting on the IPA's plan, Mr. Ulayyan said it was based on data and information derived from previous annual plans and the expertise of training staff who took into consideration the results of questionnaires circulated by the Institute's Evaluation and Follow Up Unit in cooperation with the Public Relations Department.

He pointed out that the plan includes three major programmes in the area of top management in accordance with the provisions of civil servants regulations. Nominations for such courses will only be accepted from employees occupying posts in the second and third grades of the second category, who should be in possession of the first university degree as a minimum.

The plan also includes two training courses for employees in the middle management level. The programmes will cover personnel and office management.

Applications for joining these courses will be accepted from employees in the second and third category and who have a minimum of five years experience in personnel sections or supervisory posts.

The plan also includes five specialised symposia on top management as well as four specialised programmes on financial management and accountancy.

Iraqi minister arrives for discussions

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Abdul Wahhab Al Sabbagh arrived here Friday on a two-day visit to Jordan during which he is expected to discuss with government ministers ways for increasing Iraqi-Jordanian cooperation in agricultural fields.

In a statement upon arrival in Amman, the Iraqi minister voiced his country's appreciation of Jordan's continued support to the Iraqi people.

Dr. Sabbagh was expected Saturday to hold talks with Minister of Agriculture Dr. Fayez Khawashneh, who has just returned from an Arab ministerial meeting held in Khartoum, to discuss promoting agricultural cooperation between Arab states.

Dr. Khawashneh said in a statement that the three-day meeting in Khartoum was also dedicated to ensuring food security in the Arab World through establishing a data bank about food production and through facilitating the flow of agriculture products among Arab countries.

According to Dr. Khawashneh, the Arab Agricultural Ministers will hold their next meeting in Damascus in January 1993.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

★ Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Francesco de Courten at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery.

★ Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the Institute, Jabal Amman.

★ Exhibition of photographs on the subjects of "Glimpses of Jordan" and "People" at the British Council.

★ Art exhibition by Shaker Abu Ghazaleh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

★ Video film entitled "Love, Choreography and Death" at the Goethe Institute — 8 p.m.

Government to discuss preparations for future storms; ministers tour south

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Civil Defence Council convenes today in a special session under the chairmanship of Interior Minister Jawdat Al Shoul to discuss measures taken by authorities to deal with the consequences of the snowstorm and the severe weather conditions earlier this month.

A statement by the Interior Ministry said that a general assessment of the situation will be made and plans for more appropriate precautionary measures will be taken to face any emergency in the future.

On the council are directors of the public security and civil defence departments, secretaries general of the ministries of interior, public works, transport, communications, social development, health, finance, industry and trade, education, the Prime Ministry and the Armed Forces. Saturday's meeting comes on the heels of reports in the local press of shortcomings on the part

of a number of provincial governors in dealing with the effects of the storm. The interior minister on Tuesday denied the reports, noting that all officials spared no effort in dealing with the situation.

In order to closely study the situation in the south, which was the worst hit area by the storm, the government delegated several cabinet members on visits to Karak, Maan, Tafleeh and other affected areas. They inspected work by repair and rescue teams and supervised the distribution of relief supplies to local residents.

Minister of water and irrigation Samir Kassar and Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abdul Ragheb Thursday made tours of the southern Karak Governorate, listening to Governor Eid Qataneh explaining efforts to open blocked roads. The ministers also inspected areas where water and electricity supplies were being restored. According to the governor, the

Jordanian Armed Forces, the Civil Defence Department (CDD) and teams from the Arab Potash Company (APC) and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) took part in reopening of the roads in the Karak region.

The mayor, Dr. Abdullah Dumour, asked the government to reduce electricity and water charges supplied to Karak residents and build dams to collect the rain water at Waleh, Tannour and Majlib regions.

Later, the two ministers visited Tafleeh Governorate on a tour to inspect damages sustained to the various sectors. Mr. Abdul Ragheb, along with Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti, visited Maan Governorate to examine work on repairing the electricity and road networks. Their tour took them to Shobak, Taybeh, Rajif and Wadi Moussa near the ancient Nabatean city of Petra.

Meanwhile as a sign of improved conditions, the Ministry of Education announced that tawjihi students Saturday will embark on the mid-year examination in various governorates, including the southern regions.

Altogether 73,175 students are registered to take the examinations and the ministry has decided to begin the examination session at 10 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. every day of the 12-day session.

Ministry of Education sources said that precautionary measures have been taken at the 971 tawjihi examination halls around the country should severe weather conditions occur during the examination session.

The department of Meteorology announced that frost formation will continue at night in areas where snow still covers the ground and predicted a gradual improvement in weather conditions over the next few days with a chance of light showers.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

AYF to establish library

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Youth Forum (AYF) will establish a central library at the headquarters of its general secretariat, AYF Secretary General Mahmoud Qattam said Friday. He said the AYF is also planning to set up similar libraries in its branches all over the Kingdom. The Forum's general secretariat, Dr. Qattam said, is currently holding contacts with the various concerned authorities, which could provide it with needed books and references to form a nucleus for library.

Election date set

AMMAN (Petra) — Upon directives from Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razaq Tubaisat set Apr. 22 as the day for electing a new municipal council for Irbid.

Royal Jordanian laws to be reviewed

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday holds a meeting to discuss the Legal Committee's decision on the Royal Jordanian laws, referred to it by the Upper House. The House's Financial Committee will also meet Sunday to discuss the provisional law on the general budget and the Income Tax Provisional Law, as well as the provisional laws on the Central Bank of Jordan and the revised banks laws.

Women organisations protest Israeli deportation order

AMMAN (Petra) — Women organisations in Jordan Friday staged a sit-in in front of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) headquarters in Amman in protest at the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to deport 12 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Representatives of the organisations submitted to the UNDP resident representative a memorandum in which they condemned the occupation authorities' deportation order. The memo said the deportation resolution constitutes one of a series of crimes committed by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Arab people of Palestine. It also denounced the closure of cultural and educational institutions in the occupied territories.

"The continuation of the Israeli authorities to follow the deportation policy is a violation of all international norms, resolutions and conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention adopted in 1945," the memo said.

It added that such measures come at a time when the international community unanimously agrees on the need to implement international legitimacy, "which was clearly expressed in the start of the Middle East peace process."

It called on the U.N. Security Council and international organisations to shoulder their responsibilities towards implementing international legitimacy and to undertake an active role to annul the deportation decision and to stop settlement activity in the occupied Arab land.

Budget reflects priorities of government, minister says

AMMAN (Petra) — Finance Minister Basil Jardaneh Thursday said the state budget for this year is the base year for the economic reform programme and it reflects the priorities of that programme.

In a Jordan Television interview, Mr. Jardaneh said the 1992 state budget is not an austerity budget, but rather a budget reflecting priorities and requirements of the Jordanian economy. He pointed out that the economic reform and revitalisation programme gave special priority to the resumption of sustainable economic growth. He noted that the government does not want this growth to be resumed through government expenditure and policies.

Mr. Jardaneh said that the general budget reflects the sustainable economic growth with the aim of achieving a 3 per cent genuine growth during this year. This in turn, he said, means more job opportunities for Jordanian job seekers.

وزارة الاشغال العامة والاسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE



JORDAN VALLEY AUTHORITY ADVERTISEMENT FOR PREQUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS TO RE-TENDER FOR THE NORTH GHORS CONVERSION PROJECT

The government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has secured a loan for financing the construction of this project from the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund. Applications are invited from:

- Local Jordanian Contractors classified:
 - with first grade in both water & sewerage and in Electro-Mechanical, or
 - with first grade in water & sewerage, in joint venture with first grade in Electro-Mechanical.
- Japanese Contractors, and
- Contractors of all developing countries, as defined in article 1.1. (b) of the Memorandum of Understanding of Untying of Bilateral Development Loans, in accordance with the following conditions:

Noting that all firms that were previously prequalified for participation in the first tender need apply again for prequalification and they will be considered qualified to tender provided that they designate in writing to the Secretary General of JVA their interest in being considered for invitation for the re-tender before February 01, 1992.

- Description of Project:
 - Civil Works: These comprise: 10 turnouts along King Abdullah Canal including sand traps, sumps for pumping stations and gravity turnouts and an operator's dwelling block at each turnout.
 - Electro-Mechanical Works: These include: 29 Pumping Units, 10 Mechanical screens, 10 mechanical trash racks, valving and controls, motor control centres, outdoor lighting for the areas of the turnouts and pumping stations and other ancillary electro-mechanical works.
 - Pipeline Networks and Roads: These include:
 - 280 kms of pipelines between 100-700mm diameter
 - 48 kms new service roads.
 - 170 kms rehabilitation of existing service roads.
 - 2300 farm turnout assemblies.
- Prequalification forms may be obtained from the Government Tender Directorate, Ministry of Public Works & Housing starting January 11, 1992 against a non-refundable fee of JD 100.
- The present schedule is to make tender documents available to Prequalified Contractors on March 01, 1992, and contract will be awarded on July 01, 1992.
- Last date for submission of prequalification form and documentation at the Government Tenders Directorate/Ministry of Public Works and Housing shall be Feb. 01, 1992 at 1:30 p.m. before February 01, 1992.

Chairman, Central Tenders Committee
Government Tenders Directorate
Eng. Basheer Al Jaghbeer

Jordan Times

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Why can't we join?

HANS BLIX, the head of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is worried about the nuclear legacy of the Soviet Union. Mr. Blix is not worried that the newly independent republics would launch missiles on each other or on other adversaries. He fears that those new republics might provide nuclear know-how to the "enemies" of the West in the Middle East and northern Africa or that nuclear scientists from those countries might defect to Third World states.

That these scientists "would work for some of these regimes, I think would be a source of concern for anybody," the IAEA chief said.

Mr. Blix has the right to be worried. No one wants to see a proliferation of nuclear arms technology in the Middle East or anywhere. It has become everybody's dream to see a nuclear-free world. Nuclear arms and even nuclear power have proven to be a dangerous technological development. A nuclear-free world would surely be a safe place not only for humans but for the balance of nature itself. If the Chernobyl accident is anything by which to measure, the application of nuclear technology by Third World countries will surely be a recipe for disaster.

However, the nuclear club, as long as it exists, cannot continue to be as exclusive as it is with the chief of the IAEA as its gatekeeper. Nuclear arms are already possessed by far more radical regimes than those of Iran, Libya or Iraq. Israel, a country with ministers like Ariel Sharon, is reported to have at least 300 nuclear warheads. Why then should Israel, which occupies Arab lands, oppresses the Palestinians and threatens to expel them from their homes, stock-pile nuclear heads and thus threaten the whole Arab Nation while the Arabs are prevented from developing a nuclear capability? Does Mr. Blix trust Israel, South Africa and the Ukraine but not the Arabs? Or is it because the Arabs own oil that provides his club with the energy vital for its survival and on its own terms? Besides, is nuclear technology so sophisticated and difficult to acquire except through the recruitment of "Soviet" scientists? Mr. Blix knows better. It is not in the mandate of the IAEA to dismantle existing nuclear arsenals or to campaign against them. However, he and his club should know very well that as long as super or regional powers own nuclear weapons, smaller nations aspiring for a fair deal will always endeavour to develop their own nuclear potential. It has become, over the years, very easy to shop for nuclear know-how, especially in the West itself. Short of a worldwide police force, administered by the West and modeled on the Iraq experiment, nuclear proliferation will persist.

It is unfortunate, perhaps intended, that former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev did not accomplish his dream of a nuclear-free world. But his dream and vision are still alive. What the IAEA and Mr. Blix should do is carry the flame and campaign for the destruction of all nuclear weapons everywhere. Unless that is done, a nuclear holocaust cannot be avoided. The present situation in the world at large, the conflict between north and south and the many stand-offs in Asia, Africa and the Middle East are all potential flash points. Mr. Blix needs to think globally and humanely and not only about the interests of his club.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily discussed Israel's reaction to a Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli government's decision to expel 12 Arab citizens from their homeland and said that Israeli leaders have been showing their disregard of world community decisions. A spokesman for the Israeli army has now suggested that more Palestinians should be deported for fixed periods of time in order to stifle the intifada, and the Defence Minister Moshe Arens was furious over parliament members' criticism of the government's expulsion decisions, said the paper. These statements and such behaviour clearly manifest Israel's determination to pursue the repressive policies against the Palestinians, with total disregard to the Security Council's condemnation of repressive measures and atrocities, the paper continued. In view of this situation, it is hard to believe that the Middle East peace negotiations in Washington can achieve any headway towards the establishment of a just and durable peace in the region, ending the Israeli occupation of Arab lands and restoring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland, the paper added. It said that the world community, through the Security Council, bears the primary responsibility in ensuring Israel's full compliance with the requirements of peace and security in this turbulent region.

Now that life has returned to normal in most parts of the Kingdom in the wake of the snowstorm, expect for the southern regions which still face a dilemma it is hoped that the concerned authorities will take appropriate measures that would help them deal with similar weather conditions in the future, said a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily. What is required at this moment, is a comprehensive assessment of the general performance of the various departments entrusted with offering relief and carrying out vital services under severe weather conditions, demanded Nazzari in his column. The writer said that the storm lasted three days and caused very much confusion in the life of the Kingdom, with repercussions still being felt until today. While the Armed Forces, the civil defence and the public security services were put at the disposal of the public, mobilising all their resources to deal with the consequences of the storm, many other concerned authorities failed to live up to expectation, said the writer. It is good that the storm left no tragic incidents on the public, but it is to be noted that many vital services, like water, electricity and telephones, are still absent, five days after the storm has receded, the writer said. He said that the storm clearly showed that the municipalities lack the appropriate equipment and the means to deal with severe weather conditions and their consequences on the public.

World of peril and promise

By Peter Jenkins

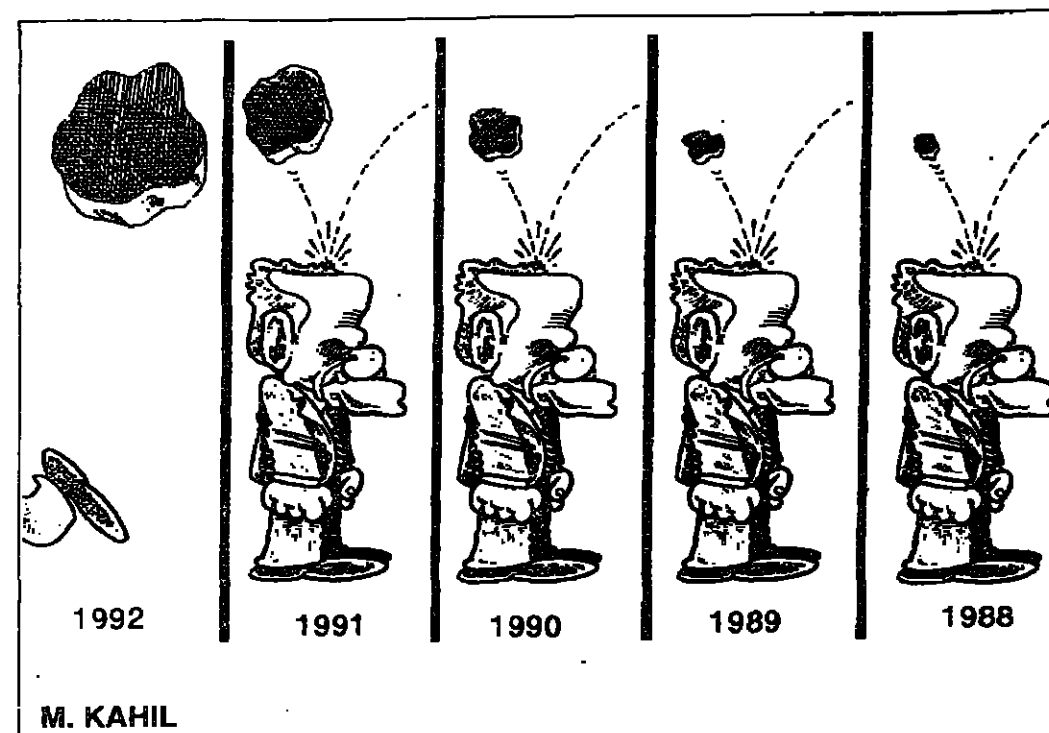
IT tests the memory to recall that the Gulf war, the attempted coup in Moscow, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the final overthrow of Mikhail Gorbachev all took place within the span of a calendar year. The war in the Gulf already seems a long while ago and some of the conclusions drawn from it today appear positively eccentric. The co-operation of the Soviet Union in the Security Council was seen as a hopeful precedent for the new world order of which President George Bush had spoken. With the cold war ended, the two superpowers could join in a kind of condominium for peace. Less than 12 months later and the Soviet Union is no more.

When the desert war was swiftly won there was much comment to the effect the United States now held the world in its sway as the unrivalled superpower, victor of the cold war, the ghost of Vietnam forever exorcised, its will and never recovered. Any one who had listened to the war debates in the Congress last January, as I had done, or caught the atmosphere of Washington at that time, would have queried this gung-ho version of events.

Far from presaging a new chapter of global leadership, the Gulf war, for most Americans, was to be the last hurrah of the post-war era. The president was well-attuned to that mood when he abruptly declared victory, brought the forces home to engage in endless victory parades, and left the Kurds to Saddam Hussein's continuing device.

Today it is even clearer than it was then that the Gulf war was not a seminal event so much as a piece of unfinished business involving an over-armed Arab country suddenly released from the grips of his cold war minders. But a state-on-state aggression was not going to be at the root of the new world disorder. The unity and resolve shown by the Security Council in those exceptional circumstances would be unlikely to apply in the circumstances then threatening to arise in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union itself. Not for nothing is the United Nations a trade union of sovereign states.

The Gulf war distracted American and European attention from the far more important task of managing the dissolution of the Soviet empire. For months afterwards, American energies were diverted into the foreign project of laying the foundations of the president's "new world order" in the Middle East — of all places to begin — and this at the expense of the threatening disorder in



economically ravaged Eastern Europe, the warring Balkans, and the rapidly disintegrating Soviet Union. Who can say whether, without these distractions, wiser courses might have been adopted sooner towards aiding the Soviet economy or promoting peaceful Balkan self-determination?

As it is, the year ends with the U.S. looking to the world far less the all-conquering giant it seemed at the moment of victory in the Arabian desert last March. The mood across the Atlantic is now plainly isolationist. Mr. Bush's popularity ratings have plummeted and, in a recent poll, 70 per cent of Americans agreed he "spends too much time on foreign policy and not enough on problems in this country." He read it, and changed overnight from a leader into a president running for re-election.

One of the big questions for the new year, which is American election year, is how far and how deep this mood may run. It is a natural response to the ending of the cold war — "We've won, let's come home." It involves disengagement from overseas security commitments and protectionism against Japan — America first. It is an old, familiar refrain.

So, at the beginning of 1992, we had still two superpowers, at the end of it we have one or, possibly none. For perhaps superpowers can exist only in symbiosis, and deprived of each other must fade away. Certainly, an election year with problems galore at home is not the ideal moment for the U.S. to adapt its

foreign policy to the changed situation in Europe and Russia. Whatever chaos ensues there, it is unlikely to amount to the clear and present threat of the kind needed to arouse the vigilance of the American people. Meanwhile, years of social neglect and regressive income distribution make it improbable that the U.S. will be ready in a hurry for another act of such imaginative generosity as inspired the Marshall Plan and which may be necessary now to promote the transition to enterprise economies and political democracy in Eastern Europe and Russia.

The summit of the G-7 industrial nations, which met in London last summer, might have been more forthcoming had it not been for the American attitude and, conceivably, Mr. Gorbachev might have been saved and a union in some form preserved. The West's relations with the Soviet Union in 1991 were a story of too little, too late — which threatens to be repeated in the new year.

In Europe, what was supposed to have been an historic year for European union was overshadowed by the disunion of the Soviet empire and of Yugoslavia. Since Maastricht the omens for a new era of Western European co-operation have been scarcely promising, with two instances of German unilateralism (on Yugoslavia and interest rates) and a renewed display of agricultural protectionism. The latter is singularly inappropriate both for addressing the mounting economic problems in Eastern Europe

and the developing mood in the U.S.

Nevertheless, the European Community remains the most powerful magnet drawing East to West in a Europe without blocs. If tensions mount between and within the former Soviet republics while America takes its "time out," the EC's role will become all the more crucial. When raising eyebrows at the new German assertiveness, we ought to recognise the greater sensitivity (and, hitherto, foresight) shown by the Federal Republic towards the opportunities and dangers in the East. In 1992 Western unity will be put to the test primarily in Eastern Europe.

By the end of the old year the euphoria that had accompanied the spectacular collapse of communism in 1989 had given way to a state of alarm which, in its more apocalyptic versions, made it sound as if the cold war had been a good idea after all. Much human suffering may be in store and, if Yugoslavia is any harbinger, bloodshed, too. But this mourning for stability is deeply unattractive among people who for all or most of their lives have taken their own freedom for granted and now worry that it will prove too heady or frustrating an experience for those for whom stability meant servitude. It still seems to me at the beginning of the new year, as it did at the beginning of the last, that the world without communism (China and Cuba apart) is a vastly more hopeful and promising place than the world that went before. — The Independent.

The week in print

Facts are stronger than words

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

Jordanian newspapers gave prominence last week to the return of Arab negotiators to Washington to meet the Israeli side, to the U.N. Security Council resolution on Israel's decision to deport 12 Palestinian citizens and domestic issues in Jordan.

Under the title "The U.N. resolution is not enough," a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that condemning Israel's decision on the expulsion of Arabs from their homes will have no meaning unless Israel desists from carrying out the decisions.

Tareq Masarweh said that the United States realises by now that the Arab World can not be appeased by soothing words alone or by the council's condemnations of Israel's practices, he said that the Arabs await real action on the part of the world community to redress the injustice.

Sawt Al Shaab daily hailed the council resolution as a step in the right direction. But the daily said in an editorial that this resolution could be shelved like many others passed on the Palestine issue over the past 25 years unless the United Nations took practical steps to see it implemented.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab made a mockery of the resolution because, he said, it would never achieve anything for the Palestinians.

Columnist Sadeq Abdul Haq said that the United States, which engineered the resolution, was conducting underhand dealing at the same time by opening talks with the Israelis at their request for a \$10 billion loan to Israel to help it build settlements in the Arab lands.

The writer said that while Washington gives lip service to the Arabs, it offers financial and material help to Israel to consolidate its position.

Taher Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour sounded sarcastic about the resolution. The writer quoted Israeli officials as saying that the U.S.-sponsored resolution was only a small price paid by Washington to draw the Arab parties once again to the negotiating table.

Udwan said that the Arabs should not overjoy at this resolution because the Security Council is impotent and can by no means force the Jewish leaders to comply and desist from expelling the 12 Arab citizens from their homeland.

His views were echoed by Abdul Rahim Omar who said that the council had already passed numerous resolutions in favour of the Palestinians, but none of them has ever been implemented. Palestinians land remains occupied, Arab citizens continue to be deported, Arab homes continue to be demolished and Israel's atrocities continue unabated, the writer said in his column published in Al Ra'i daily.

In an editorial, Al Ra'i cast doubt about the U.N. Security Council's decision when it said that passing such a resolution is one thing and ensuring its implementation is something else.

Noting that Israel had disregarded all other resolutions since 1948, the paper said that Israel will no doubt mock at the council's decision and the will of the world community to establish justice and will go ahead with its expulsion plans undeterred by mere resolutions.

Referring to the resumed peace negotiations in Washington, a columnist in Al Dustour asked why the Arabs should negotiate with the Israelis when they realise in advance that the Jewish state was bent on implementing its plans.

Taher Al Udwan said that on the eve of the resumption of the negotiations in Washing-

ton, the Israeli government endorsed a 1992 fiscal budget with ample allocations, estimated at \$6.5 billion, for settlement programmes in the occupied Arab lands. With such budget, hopes for reaching a settlement with the Israelis are dashed, especially as the United States is expected to approve a \$10 billion loan guarantee to Israel to help it carry out its plans, the writer said.

Al Dustour daily called on the Arabs to do all they can to get down to real negotiations on questions of substance. The paper said that although Israel would be trying to push the issues of substance aside and discuss procedural matters only, the Arab negotiators should enlist the United States' help and do all they can to ensure negotiations on the exchange of land for peace.

The paper said that the U.S. should also be sought to ensure protection to the Palestinians following the Security Council resolution that condemned Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinian citizens.

Salameh Ekour cast doubt on the outcome of the resumed peace negotiations in Washington and noted that Israel's prime minister was bound to plant more mines in the path of these negotiations to abort the peace process.

The decision to expel the 12 Palestinians and the stepped up repressive measures in the occupied lands are part of Israel's ongoing efforts to abort the peace talks, said the writer in Sawt Al Shaab daily.

His views are backed by a guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab who said Israel realises that the Arabs can not achieve their end through the Washington talks because they are weak and can not fight to regain their usurped lands and, at the same time, can not enlist the help of the United States to back them in their demands.

For this reason, said Samir Nayfeh, and in view of Washington's lack of will to force Israel to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions, there can be no fruitful end to these talks.

Casting more doubt on the outcome of the peace talks, Mohammad Kawash, who writes for Al Dustour, said that Israel speaks and acts along two different lines. The Jewish state announced the creation of a new settlement in the occupied Arab territories on the eve of the departure of its delegation to the peace talks in Washington, he said. When the last round of talks was underway in the U.S. capital, Israeli settlers forcefully occupied Arab homes in the town of Silwan, the writer added. What is wanted, is an order from the United States to Israel to halt settlement plans and stop evicting people from their homeland, demanded the writer.

A columnist in Al Dustour described President Bush's visit to Japan as a desperate attempt to reach a trade balance with the Japanese by making them import more U.S. products.

George Haddad said that the current economic recession in the United States is compelling the president to take any step aimed at stimulating the national economy, including approaching the Asian nations and Europe for help.

The Americans now consider Japan as a real threat to their economic existence and are afraid that the Japanese could join the Germans in creating an economic axis to offset the American economic power.

The writer accused Mr. Bush of selling his people illusions about economic and political victories while in reality the United States is facing a recession unprecedented under any other administration.

The cutting edge

In 1969, the U.S. made history by landing its Apollo spacecraft on the moon. The same year Japan's Sharp Corporation made waves, by introducing the world's first calculator using large-scale integration (LSI) — a technology allowing extreme miniaturisation, and thereby initiating a race among calculator manufacturers toward the smallest and least expensive device. Then, in 1973, Sharp announced another world first — a calculator with a liquid crystal display (LCD). LSI and liquid crystal technology turned Sharp into one of Japan's top electronics makers. Now, the company is changing its course once again. The key to success this time is a concept it calls "vertical development."

By Katsumi Kato

SHARP was founded in 1912 in Osaka by the late Tokujiro Hayakawa. Born into a poor family in 1893 and given up for adoption soon after, Hayakawa was an elementary-school dropout who apprenticed himself to a metalworker and became extremely skillful. In 1915, he invented the mechanical pencil. The brand name he gave it eventually became his company's name as well.

After World War II, Sharp mass-produced radios and televisions, but not until electronic calculators did the company break into the market for non-household appliances. The leader of the team that developed the liquid crystal calculator was current company vice-president Atsushi Asada. During the period of intense competition to develop an affordable hand-held calculator, Mr. Asada says, he learned that "when a manufacturer introduces a new product, the period in which a profit is assured simply by the product's novelty, in short, To maximise profits, a manufacturer must apply the core technology to still newer products."

In 1979 Sharp ended what had come to be known as the "calculator war" by introducing a "card" calculator just 1.6mm thick. The same year, Japanese household electronics manufacturers grew by selling radios and televisions to a population newly able to use them, as the necessary infrastructure — broadcasting networks in that case — was being forged as part of public policy. Under vertical development, however, manufacturers undertake to create infrastructure in addition to products and markets.

Already there are a number of examples. In Osaka, for one, Sharp united with Kinji Nippon Railway Co. and a major trading house to form a cable television company. Sharp supplies the enterprise with electronic equipment. In another case, Sharp, together with Fuji Bank, developed terminals for a system of home banking via facsimile, the first of its kind. Fujin Credit, a credit-card company related to Fuji Bank, began selling the devices this year for 80,000 yen (\$620) apiece. In addition to serving as a regular fax machine, it can also be used to order goods from retailers, get information about restaurants and entertainment events, and even reserve tickets. For ordering goods or reserving tickets, the user selects from displayed menu an appropriate order form, which is then printed out. After completing the form, the user feeds it back into the fax, which sends a copy to the merchant. Meanwhile, the bill is settled by Fuji Bank, where the cost of the goods or services is transferred from the buyer's account to the seller's. Once it becomes possible for consumers, without leaving their homes, to learn what a given market has in stock, identify bargain items, and get help planning meals that include them — right down to recipes for specific dishes, a proliferation of home fax machines is sure to occur.

But Sharp's dreams do not stop here. One is to merge its expertise in electronic notebooks with the cellular communications system that is quickly being expanded throughout Japan. Communication between a portable computer terminal and a mainframe is already possible via a modem, but to use a modem one has to have access to a telephone. A cellular system, on the other hand, can be used anywhere.

Another is that of an "information vending machine." Just like vending machines for soft drinks or cigarettes, information vending machines could be set up all over Japan. A user would insert a card containing an integrated circuit to receive, in code form, information about local events, restaurants, or public transportation. Then, by inserting the card into an electronic notebook, the user could see information displayed on a screen.

This is the essence of vertical development: rather than waiting for new infrastructure to be built, companies create it. That is the direction in which Sharp sees itself as moving. In Mr. Asada's words: "In the next age Sharp, with a balance of household electrical appliances, information equipment and component technology, will manifest its inherent strength." — Look Japan.

will change. While we have the technology necessary to make the changes, they're going to take a while. That's always the trouble with technological development, but the work is nonetheless satisfying. It makes us dream."

During the 1980s Mr. Sasaki told a young engineering PhD working for Sharp that calculators should be made simple enough for children to use. That scientist, who doubted at the time that such a device would ever be evolved, was current vice-president Asada.

Thinking ahead

Achievements beginning with the electronic calculator: propelled Sharp to the rank of a global corporation. Today, the company is capitalised at 171.3 billion yen (\$1.3 billion) and has 27,000 employees. The Sharp group, including 64 retail companies and factories in 39 countries, employs 65,000 worldwide, and its 1990 sales came to 1.15 trillion yen (\$8.9 billion).

Perceiving an eventual end to the growth spurt initiated by electronic calculators, about two years ago Mr. Asada proposed a new concept for future growth: "vertical development," a phrase he coined himself. After World War II, he reasoned, Japanese household electronics manufacturers grew by selling radios and televisions to a population newly able to use them, as the necessary infrastructure — broadcasting networks in that case — was being forged as part of public policy. Under vertical development, however, manufacturers undertake to create infrastructure in addition to products and markets.

Already there are a number of examples. In Osaka, for one, Sharp united with Kinji Nippon Railway Co. and a major trading house to form a cable television company. Sharp supplies the enterprise with electronic equipment. In another case, Sharp, together with Fuji Bank, developed terminals for a system of home banking via facsimile, the first of its kind. Fujin Credit, a credit-card company related to Fuji Bank, began selling the devices this year for 80,000 yen (\$620) apiece. In addition to serving as a regular fax machine, it can also be used to order goods from retailers, get information about restaurants and entertainment events, and even reserve tickets. For ordering goods or reserving tickets, the user selects from displayed menu an appropriate order form, which is then printed out. After completing the form, the user feeds it back into the fax, which sends a copy to the merchant. Meanwhile, the bill is settled by Fuji Bank, where the cost of the goods or services is transferred from the buyer's account to the seller's. Once it becomes possible for consumers, without leaving their homes, to learn what a given market has in stock, identify bargain items, and get help planning meals that include them — right down to recipes for specific dishes, a proliferation of home fax machines is sure to occur.

But Sharp's dreams do not stop here. One is to merge its expertise in electronic notebooks with the cellular communications system that is quickly being expanded throughout Japan. Communication between a portable computer terminal and a mainframe is already possible via a modem, but to use a modem one has to have access to a telephone. A cellular system, on the other hand, can be used anywhere.

Another is that of an "information vending machine." Just like vending machines for soft drinks or cigarettes, information vending machines could be set up all over Japan. A user would insert a card containing an integrated circuit to receive, in code form, information about local events, restaurants, or public transportation. Then, by inserting the card into an electronic notebook, the user could see information displayed on a screen.

This is the essence of vertical development: rather than waiting for new infrastructure to be built, companies create it. That is the direction in which Sharp sees itself as moving. In Mr. Asada's words: "In the next age Sharp, with a balance of household electrical appliances, information equipment and component technology, will manifest its inherent strength." — Look Japan.

Israel hints at compromise

(Continued from page 1)

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the daily Haaretz reported. Mr. Dumas has met with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat on several occasions and has close ties with Arab countries. At the United Nations, France has supported 50 per cent of anti-Israel resolutions, Haaretz said. In his meeting with Mr. Dumas, Mr. Levy criticised France and other Western nations for preaching peace on the one hand while "flooding the region with weapons of mass destruction."

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Mr. Dumas said he did not raise the issue of Israel's planned expansion of 12 Palestinian settlements. When asked to remark on the widespread view among Israelis that France's policy in the Middle East was pro-Arab, Mr. Dumas said: "That is a mistake. It is a wrong impression."

Mr. Dumas later met with Palestinians from the occupied territories, including supporters of PLO factions that oppose the peace talks.

"We hope the peace process will permit less tension in the occupied territories and at the end a solution can be found," Mr. Dumas said to reporters.

"We are against deportations everywhere in the world, of course," he added.

Ziad Abu Ziad, an editor of a Hebrew newspaper and advisor to the Palestinian negotiating team, said he asked Mr. Dumas to seek more European, United Nations and PLO involvement in the peace talks. "This process should not be only under the American protection. We want France to be in the centre of the peace process," Mr. Abu Ziad said after meeting with Mr. Dumas.

Mr. Dumas also scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Defence Minister Moshe Arens and Shimon Peres, leader of the opposition Labour Party.

In another development, Mr. Levy refused to say Thursday whether he was flying to Beijing on Jan. 22, fueling speculation he would make the trip to establish diplomatic ties with China.

"No comment. I am not ready to discuss this," Mr. Levy told reporters when asked about an uncorroborated report of his planned trip published on Wednesday in the Hong Kong-based weekly the Far Eastern Economic Review.

The report said Mr. Levy would spend at least five days in Beijing, clearing the way for China to take part in the multilateral talks.

Israel is widely reported to have made full relations between the two countries a condition for Chinese participation in the peace talks. Prime Minister Shamir said on Dec. 27 he expected diplomatic ties with China soon.

Days before, Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang met Mr. Shamir and Mr. Levy during what was to have been a confidential visit to Israel. Israeli news reports said Mr. Levy leaked news of the visit.

Defence Minister Arens secretly visited China in early November but Israeli military censors for days suppressed news of the first-ever visit by an Israeli minister.

The review said that late last year Mr. Arafat asked for Chinese participation in the peace talks, implicitly accepting Sino-Israeli normalisation. Reuven Merhav, former director-general of Israel's foreign ministry, said on Thursday that seven years ago the Jewish state began trying to convince China that establishing ties would not harm Beijing's alliance with the Arabs.

He said the alliance dated back to Arab support for Beijing's taking a permanent seat in the U.N. Security Council in the 1970s.

China has been the only one of five permanent members without ties to Israel since the Soviet Union renewed relations with the Jewish state in October.

France developing nuclear reactors for next century

By Sue Landau
Reuter

PARIS — France is designing a new generation of nuclear power stations, convinced it will remain highly dependent on atomic energy into the 21st century despite fears elsewhere of another Chernobyl.

The designs aim to reduce the risk of accidents and limit the consequences should they happen.

France has had few safety worries but some operational problems with its present generation of nuclear power stations, which account for 75 per cent of its electricity supplies.

Officials at the Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) told Reuters they were working on the assumption that this proportion would probably remain steady. It compares with 20 per cent dependency in the United States and 26 per cent in Japan.

"Today there are no objective reasons for it (the 75 per cent share) to become smaller," said Jacques Bouchard, head of reactors at the CEA.

In the 1970s France, knocked sideways by the 1973 oil shock, began to build what was to become an extensive network of nuclear power stations. At the end of last year, 56 nuclear power stations yielded a combined power of 55.8 million watts.

The plants were given a 30-year life, which means the first nuclear power station should be replaced in the year 2007. The CEA has 400 million francs (\$100 million) a year to spend on scientific research for the next generation.

It is preparing experiments and tests so that the new model will be ready for the year 2000, Mr. Bouchard said in an interview.

Essentially, France will continue to use pressurised water reactors (PWRs), which form the bulk of the plants in use today. Its two remaining uranium-graphite reactors will be closed in the next two or three years, he said.

The CEA is also working on a new generation of fast breeder reactors, of which there are currently only experimental or prototype versions. Fast breeder reactors produce their own fuel and cut down on toxic waste.

The prototype Superphénix fast breeder in southern France was shut down a year ago after air got into the inert argon gas surrounding the liquid sodium used as a coolant and polluted it.

The new model of fast breeder, being developed in partnership with other European countries, should be designed by the year 2010, Mr. Bouchard said.

Fast breeders have been an ideal of the nuclear industry for more than 20 years but the technology has proved extremely difficult to develop. They will form a limited part of France's nuclear energy base in the next century, Mr. Bouchard said, but could give no proportion.

For both types of reactors the research involves refining design aspects, subjecting them to on-site testing and using mathematical methods to model possible accidents and calculate their probability.

"Our first aim is to do even better on safety," Mr. Bouchard

said. "The main problem with existing reactors is that they were put in place quickly. We would wish not to renew as rapidly."

France's policy of developing nuclear energy has had support from all political parties. A groundswell of concern and criticism began last year but was abruptly stifled by the Gulf crisis.

The then industry minister, Roger Fauroux, cited the resulting oil price fluctuations and uncertainty over supplies as illustrating the wisdom of French nuclear policy.

France can now independently meet 48 per cent of its energy needs, compared with 22 per cent in 1973.

Mr. Bouchard said the CEA aims to develop designs for the reactor core, cooling circuits and the outer shield which will cut the risk of accidents and limit the consequences should any occur.

The CEA calculated the chances of a core "meltdown" at any of France's existing reactors

at one in 100,000 per year. Mr. Bouchard said accidents were usually caused by things that had been foreseen, but how they progressed often varied widely from expert predictions.

"The difference between Three Mile Island and Chernobyl was in consequences," he said.

At Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, overheating caused a radiation leak in 1979 which was contained. The meltdown at Chernobyl in the Ukraine in 1986

caused an explosion and radioactivity contaminated a wide area.

The CEA is working to incorporate modifications which had been made piecemeal in the light of Three Mile Island and Chernobyl into the overall design for the new generation reactors, a cost-saving approach, Mr. Bouchard said.

It also wants to extend the time the nuclear fuel stays in the reactor core by enriching the fuel more, another way to economise on costs, he said.

Jalloud says allegations a pretext

(Continued from page 1)

tigation is complete and impartial.

The three Western countries insist the accused must stand trial in the countries where they have been charged.

Maj. Jalloud argued the American, British and French originally suspected others of carrying out the bombings but then accused Libya for reasons of politics instead of evidence.

"They have made Libya a scapegoat, a scapegoat for their own internal problems," he said.

Libya has requested a special U.N. General Assembly session to discuss abolition of international terrorism.

Libya's ambassador, Ali Elhouderi, made the request in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

The General Assembly is in recess, but can reconvene at any time. A majority of the 166 members is required to schedule a special session.

U.N. officials said the letter, sent Tuesday, mentioned terrorism as the only topic for the

special session.

But a statement Wednesday by the Libyan mission to the United Nations said Libya wanted the session to discuss "an historical project for the world community" being introduced by Libya.

Tehran Radio said an envoy of Col. Qadhafi had asked Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to support Libya against Western threats of retaliation for its alleged role in the airline bombings.

Tehran Radio quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as telling Mustafa Kharoubi that Iran backed Libya's demand that the cases be investigated in an impartial international venue.

No sign of Algeria troop movements

(Continued from page 1)

trouble," said one diplomat.

Last June, shortly before the original date for the poll, the army announced it had deployed in major towns to prevent unrest during voting. The poll was postponed after unrest.

There has been no announcement of any movement or official reaction to Mr. Hachani's statement.

ment.

In Algiers on Thursday, the only sign of additional security was a small group of riot police deployed outside the Foreign Ministry. There was no increased security outside the main government offices where the prime minister is based.

Western legal experts say that even if the FIS gained a two-third

majority in parliament, final power remained legally with President Chadli Benjedid. The fundamentalists could still not change the constitution but would complete freedom to pass laws designed to turn Algeria into an Islamic state.

Mr. Benjedid then could only refuse to sign the law and send it back to the assembly. If the FIS persisted, he would have no option but to dissolve parliament and call new elections.

Kohl worried about former Soviet

(Continued from page 1)

offered more money, said Vyacheslav Rozanov of the Kurchatov institute of atomic energy.

"It's possible that they would agree to a higher paying job," said Mr. Rozanov, deputy chief of the institute's thermonuclear department. The institute, the top Soviet nuclear research centre, was encouraged its scientists to reject such offers, he said.

Mr. Rozanov, who did not identify the two experts, said the Libyans offered them jobs in peaceful nuclear energy work, but he said their abilities could be useful in developing nuclear warheads.

Anatoly Zemskov, a spokesman for Russia's nuclear power ministry, said he knew of one case in which a foreign government tried unsuccessfully to hire one of the ministry's atomic ex-

perts for \$5,000 a month.

"But there is no trend of this kind — yet," said Mr. Zemskov. Yuri Rogozhin, head spokesman for the Russian nuclear safety agency, said nuclear energy specialists have few opportunities in Russia because of cutbacks in defence spending and construction of atomic reactors.

"If the choice is between starving or getting work in your field, then you must take the job" even if it means working for Libya, Mr. Rogozhin said.

N. Korea setting up special zones

TOKYO (AP) — North Korea has announced it is creating two free economic and trade zones on its northeast coast, offering foreign investors tax incentives to help with the nation's economic development.

The ports for the zones in Rajin and Sonbong, and the adjacent port of Chongjin, will be free trade ports, said the north's official Korean Central News Agency,

monitored in Tokyo. Chongjin is about 465 kilometres north-east of the capital, Pyongyang.

Severe economic difficulties have been reported in communist North Korea following a decline in trade and aid from the now defunct Soviet Union, formerly a major supplier to Pyongyang.

"The state shall protect by law the capital invested by foreigners and their income from businesses

in the free economic and trade zones," said the North Korean agency.

It said "various special favours" and reduction or exemption of income taxes and customs duties for businesses in the zones would depend on the character of the investments.

The intention in setting up the zones is to accelerate North Korea's economic development,

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Bomb shakes British government offices

LONDON (Agencies) — A bomb exploded Friday morning near the Ministry of Defence and about 300 metres from Prime Minister John Major's office. Police said there were no injuries.

Police had sealed off the area after a caller claiming to be from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) telephoned a warning to the London bureau of CBS News, the U.S. network, 30 minutes before the blast.

The blast during the height of rush-hour at 9:10 a.m. (0910 GMT) shook buildings and shattered windows in the Whitehall area, where many government offices are located.

"It was like a clap of thunder, a rumbling," said Wyn Langron, a press assistant at the London Fire Brigade.

A Scotland Yard spokeswoman, who by custom cannot be named, said: "It wasn't in a car. It was a package."

The doorman and banqueting manager at the National Liberal Club, about metres from the explosion, said earlier it was a car bomb. The size of the device was not known.

The IRA stepped up its bombing campaign in Northern Ireland and in Britain before Christmas.

Northern Ireland was hit by more than a dozen bomb alerts at the time of Friday's explosion in London, police said. Several streets in Belfast were sealed off and a shopping complex in the city centre was evacuated but nothing was found.

In February, the IRA launched a missile into the garden of Mr. Major's 10 Downing St. residence from a car parked in Horse Guards, only a block from the scene of Friday's car bomb in Whitehall Place.

Conservative lawmaker Robin Squire, who was in Downing Street when Friday's bomb exploded, said Mr. Major had left for a meeting about 10 minutes earlier.

"We can't tell you where he was, but we can tell you he wasn't here. We're not discussing his location," said a Downing Street spokesman, who by custom also was not named.

Police cars, ambulances and fire engines had raced to the area south of Trafalgar Square, which remained sealed through the morning.

CBS News in London said it received a phone call about half an hour before the blast from a man who identified himself as being from the IRA, and gave a code word. The network warned Scotland Yard.

Adrian Monck, the assignment editor who received the call, said "at 0830 GMT, a guy called direct to the news desk, (and) said, 'IRA. There's a bomb in Whitehall Place. It will go off in 30 minutes.'"

The National Liberal Club, near the bomb site, overlooks the Thames River, about 2½ blocks from Westminster Abbey, Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. Downing Street is only a few blocks away.

Igor Gromyko, a freelance journalist from Moscow staying at the nearby Horse Guards Hotel said he was jogging about 100 metres away.

"I see this blast and I see a lot of smoke and a lot of dust. It was a terrifying experience," he said.

Neil Flavin, who was doing excavating work for British gas at Trafalgar Square about half a kilometre away, said: "It's like nothing I've ever heard, much louder than a shotgun blast."

"We were using the jackhammer and had muffs on and we still heard it. You could feel the ground shaking."

The bomb exploded a day after U.S. Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney visited both the Ministry of Defence and Downing Street. He flew to Germany Friday morning.

The army called out several hundred additional part-time soldiers in Belfast Thursday in response to the upsurge in IRA bombings in the Northern Ireland capital. Six large bombs have exploded there in the last two months.

The IRA's military campaign, supported by a minority of Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland, grew out of the Catholic civil rights protests and violent clashes of the 1960s.

The IRA has attacked police and army units in its effort to end British rule in the province, and it has killed people who it says were Protestant paramilitaries, informers or collaborators with British rule.

Since 1969, the IRA has killed more people than any other group in Northern Ireland. In 1991, the IRA was responsible for 40 of the 94 deaths attributed to sectarian and political violence.

Commonwealth foreign ministers express hope for compromise

MOSCOW (AP) — Foreign ministers of the new Commonwealth of Independent States met Friday, with its two most powerful members Russia and Ukraine — split over who should inherit the remnants of the Soviet Armed Forces.

But foreign ministers for both former Soviet republics expressed hope that a compromise could be found.

Ukraine has tried to assert control over the prestigious Black Sea Fleet, one of the jewels of the Soviet Navy, and also has taken steps toward gaining control over land-based forces based on Ukrainian soil.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Thursday that Russia will never allow its neighbour to take over the fleet of 45 surface warships and 300 smaller vessels.

"The Black Sea Fleet was, is and will be Russia's," the TASS News Agency quoted him as telling aircraft workers during a tour of provincial Russian cities.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko said Friday that Mr. Yeltsin's comments "caused surprise, and that's putting it mildly." He added that he

thought the remarks were made "in the heat of the moment."

"This issue cannot be decided on a podium," he said before the meeting of the 11 foreign ministers. "It deserves our sitting down at the negotiating table and searching for acceptable solutions."

There were also conciliatory words from Russia's foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, who expressed hope that the two states could find a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute.

Mr. Kozyrev said he favoured joint use of the former Soviet Union's armed forces during a transition period.

On Thursday, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk temporarily defused the dispute by announcing a six-month postponement of his demand that the fleet switch allegiance to Ukraine. TASS and Russian Television reported.

Mr. Kravchuk said Ukraine would agree to put the fleet under the control of the Commonwealth of Independent States as long as the ships carry nuclear weapons. But after July, when the last of the nuclear weapons are scheduled to be removed from the ships, the fleet must belong to Ukraine, Mr. Kravchuk said.

Mr. Kravchuk, Mr. Yeltsin and the leaders of the other two former Soviet republics with strategic nuclear weapons, Belarus and Kazakhstan, have agreed to place all nuclear arms under a unified command. When President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned last month, he gave the launch codes to Mr. Yeltsin.

But Mr. Kravchuk has insisted that Ukraine have the right to block the launching of any nuclear weapons from its territory. He said Thursday that a device soon would be installed in his office giving him the ability to prevent a launch — although not to order one. TASS reported.

Mr. Yeltsin's comments, his strongest yet on the issue, reflected Russia's deep emotional and historical attachment to the fleet established by Catherine the Great in 1783.

Thousands of Russians, many of them sailors, rallied Wednesday in the fleet's home port of Sevastopol against Ukrainian control over the ships.

Mr. Kravchuk says Russia is claiming the fleet — based in Ukrainian waters — because Russian leaders still do not treat Ukraine as an independent state.

He also expressed regret that he agreed last month to the appointment of former Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov as interim commander of the Commonwealth's armed forces, according to Yuri Lukanov, a spokesman for the Ukrainian independence movement Rukh.

"We'll try to fix that," Mr. Lukanov quoted Mr. Kravchuk as telling the officers at the Ukrainian parliament building.

Marshal Shaposhnikov and other top commanders of the former Soviet Armed Forces have harshly criticised Mr. Kravchuk's demand that all non-nuclear troops stationed in Ukraine swear allegiance to the republic, leave the military or move elsewhere.

Mr. Yeltsin, speaking in the southern Russian city of Ulyanovsk, said he had sent a message to all officers and sailors in the Black Sea Fleet telling them they were "under the protection of the Russian president"

claiming the fleet — based in Ukrainian waters — because Russian leaders still do not treat Ukraine as an independent state.

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He also expressed regret that he agreed last month to the appointment of former Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov as interim commander of the Commonwealth's armed forces, according to Yuri Lukanov, a spokesman for the Ukrainian independence movement Rukh.

EC to resume truce monitoring in Croatia

ZAGREB (R) — The European Community Friday resumed truce monitoring in Yugoslavia, suspended because of the killing of five EC observers.

"It has been agreed to resume monitoring activities at 12 o'clock (1100 GMT) on Jan. 10, on a day to day basis until explicit and satisfactory security guarantees are given by both sides," said Joao Da Silva, the EC spokesman in Zagreb.

The 180 or so unarmed observers stopped work Tuesday after five of their colleagues — four Italian soldiers and a Frenchman — were killed when a Yugoslav army jet blasted their helicopter north east of Zagreb during a U.N.-brokered ceasefire.

The resumed monitoring mission were confirmed only to land observer operations. EC helicopters remained grounded for the time being, deputy spokesman Mira Gomes said.

The army has said it was an accident caused by a mix-up in air control coordination in closed Yugoslav Air Space, though it has not said why the pilot felt it necessary to open fire.

But Italian leaders say they suspect it was deliberate.

The EC had demanded fresh guarantees for the safety of its observers from the army and also Croatian independence forces before they resumed monitoring.

Mr. Da Silva said the two sides had reaffirmed existing guarantees Wednesday but extra guarantees would be discussed at a meeting Saturday of the three sides at the neutral location of Pecs, Hungary.

He said monitoring was being resumed now because both the army and the Croats had shown a "positive attitude."

Meanwhile, Serbs declared their own republic in ethnically mixed Bosnia-Herzegovina, a sign of growing tensions at a time of high hopes for a lasting ceasefire in Yugoslavia.

Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic, who has asked the European Community (EC) to

recognise his republic's independence on Jan. 15, vowed not to let the Serbs secede.

"We will not permit this," Croatian radio quoted him as saying.

Fears grew that the worsening ethnic friction in the republic at the heart of the disintegrating Balkan federation could spread Croatia's war there.

In Croatia, the most successful ceasefire in six months of fighting raised hopes of a permanent peace but the new tensions in Bosnia and the appointment of a Serb hardliner as caretaker federal defence minister in Belgrade clouded growing optimism.

General Blagoje Adzic replaced General Veljko Kadijevic who resigned Wednesday, a day after a federal army jet shot down a helicopter, killing the five EC truce monitors.

The Italians were buried with full honours after a service in Udine, Italy, where Pope John Paul II lamented the "agonising tragedy" of Yugoslavia's war.

Italian leaders said they suspected the attack was deliberate.

Leaders of Yugoslavia's six warring republics came together in Brussels Thursday for peace talks with EC mediator Lord Carrington who called the truce in Croatia, where more than 6,000 people have died, very encouraging.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic accused the EC of overstepping its role by considering recognising separate Yugoslav republics.

Portugal, acting as current EC president, said the Community's 12 governments were unlikely to reach a common view on whether to recognise Croatia, Bosnia and two other would-be independent Yugoslav republics.

The Yugoslav crisis tops the agenda for a meeting of the 12 EC foreign ministers in Brussels starting Friday.

Italian President Francesco Cossiga said he had given his "formal assent" for the recognition of the republics.

French Socialists elect Fabius as party leader

PARIS (AP) — The governing Socialist Party elected Laurent Fabius as its new leader Thursday and pledged loyalty to long-time rival Michel Rocard, boosting Mr. Rocard's chances of succeeding President Francois Mitterrand.

In his acceptance speech, Mr. Fabius confirmed what other politicians had been hinting for days — that he has shelved his own presidential aspirations and would accept former Premier Rocard as front-runner for the Socialists' nomination to succeed Mr. Mitterrand in 1995.

Mr. Rocard "carries our hopes and those of many French people," said Mr. Fabius, adding that Mr. Rocard could count on his loyalty.

Mr. Fabius, also a former premier, will step down as National Assembly president to take on the task of healing internal feuds and reviving the Socialists' sagging popularity. He was elected without dissent by the party's 131-member governing committee.

Eleven members abstained, including the left-leaning former Defence Minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement. He complained that policy issues had been

ignored during the selection of a new leader.

The outgoing party leader, Pierre Mauroy, announced his resignation plans earlier this week and named Mr. Fabius, a favourite of Mr. Mitterrand, as his preferred successor.

Some party activists complained that this tactic precluded a democratic selection of a new leader.

But Mr. Fabius' election was assured when he received the backing of Mr. Rocard, his long-time rival.

Both Mr. Fabius and Mr. Rocard have served as Mr. Mitterrand's prime minister. But Mr. Mitterrand viewed Mr. Fabius as a protégé with like-minded devotion to Socialist principles, and clashed with Mr. Rocard, who espouses relatively conservative policies.

Their rivalry was a major component in factional disputes that have severely embarrassed the party in recent years. Socialist fortunes suffered further in 1991 as unemployment soared past 9.5 per cent and Mr. Rocard's replacement as premier, Edith Cresson, plummeted in opinion polls.

Mr. Bush said American military ties with Japan will remain strong, and the Japanese would continue to permit and financially back deployment of American forces.

But it was trade that Mr. Bush came to Japan to talk about, and the results on that score were ambiguous.

Cars account for three-quarters of Japan's trade surplus with the United States, and Japan exports some 1.75 million vehicles to the United States. Of the 35,000 U.S. vehicles Japan imports a year, 20,000 are built by Japanese factories in the United States.

So, fulfilling a promise to import 20,000 more U.S.-made cars a year, one of the few specific agreements reached during the summit, will make little difference in the overall imbalance.

Mr. Bush also claimed a breakthrough in gaining Japan's endorsement of a proposal for settling long-stalemated talks under the Geneva-based General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The proposal by GATT Director-General Arthur Dunkel would require that quotas for farm products be replaced by tariffs.

But senior officials at Japan's Agricultural Ministry said Japan had not changed its opposition, despite the vaguely worded endorsement.

Thousands of Georgians mourn 2 killed in pro-Gamsakhurdia rally

TBILISI (AP) — Thousands of mourners wept Thursday at funerals for two men killed at a rally in support of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and the ousted president was quoted as saying he would not rule out forming a government in exile.

The streets of Tbilisi, where fierce fighting raged for more than two weeks, were coming alive again with shoppers and motorists. Stores reopened and residents eagerly bought newspapers that were published Wednesday for the first time since the fighting broke out Dec. 22.

The exception was the area around central Rustaveli Prospect, the scene of the heaviest battles over the Georgian parliament, where Mr. Gamsakhurdia was holed up for 16 days before

fleeing Monday to Armenia. People still gaped at the shattered buildings hit by artillery and rockets.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, elected president by a landslide in May, fled amid the fighting between troops loyal to him and those who supported the loose coalition of former government officials and dissidents who opposed his rule.

They formed a council to rule the former Soviet republic until elections can be held. The newspaper Izvestia quoted Tengiz Sigua, who is heading the interim government, as saying the military council would probably resign by Jan. 12-13, and a new parliamentary election would probably be held by April 30.

Mr. Sigua quit in August as Mr. Gamsakhurdia's prime

minister but has now resumed the post with the president's ouster.

Funerals were held for two men who were killed Friday when gunmen loyal to the military council opened fire on a pro-Gamsakhurdia rally.

At the funeral for 23-year-old Levant Taktakishvili, about 2,000 mourners jammed the courtyard of the apartment building where the university student lived.

They raised their fists in a silent protest, then marched behind his open coffin that was draped in the red, white and black Georgian flag. Wreaths and bunches of flowers filled a small van as the weeping crowd walked slowly behind it.

Mr. Sigua told Izvestia that the shootings were a mistake.

Cheney: West must be ready for nuclear spread

LONDON (AP) — U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has said that the West must brace for the spread of nuclear weapons to new nations following the breakup of the Soviet Union.

He said reports that Libya offered jobs to two Russian nuclear experts were indicative of the growing threat of nuclear proliferation. The scientists turned down the jobs, according to Vyacheslav Rozanov of the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy.

"I think that... as a result of the breakup of the former Soviet Union, the prospects for proliferation of technology, personnel who are knowledgeable about the technology and weapons of mass destruction, have significantly increased," he said.

Mr. Cheney spoke to reporters at the start of a six-day visit to Britain and Germany to consult key allies on military issues following the Soviet collapse.

During an hour-long meeting, Prime Minister John Major and Mr. Cheney discussed a wide

spread of world issues, including NATO, the former Soviet Union, and war-torn Yugoslavia, a spokesman for Mr. Major said.

They also agreed on the need to maintain a presence in northern Iraq, particularly out of concern for the Kurds, the spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

Defence Secretary Tom King and Mr. Cheney said key items on their agenda were the control and dismantling of the Soviet nuclear arsenal and what the West can do about nuclear proliferation.

Mr. Cheney said he wasn't certain the West can successfully stop technology transfers by former Soviet nuclear scientists.

"We need to try, we're doing that, by working with the Soviets in this area," he said.

But Mr. Cheney said Western defence ministers must plan "for all kinds of eventualities" including the "possibility that in the future there will be more nations of the world that have nuclear weapons than is true today."

Bush's Japan mission ends with dissatisfaction on both sides

TOKYO (AP) — President Bush's trade mission to Japan ended in a final round of finger-pointing: U.S. automakers were unhappy with vague trade pledges, while the Japanese said the White House was making them a scapegoat for America's inability to cure its economic ills.

Mr. Bush was en route home Friday at the end of a 12-day journey to Australia, Singapore, Korea and Japan.

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One just prior to takeoff, Mr. Bush said he thought he had "accomplished a lot" although "it will take awhile for people to realise what did happen." Earlier, he said trip resulted in "leveling the playing field" in U.S.-Japan competition and winning jobs for Americans.

Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's assessment was effusive: "In the history of the human race, never before have two nations of such different history and culture deepened such a relationship of mutual interdependence."

But smiles were scarce away from the formalities.

After the talks ended, U.S. automakers accompanying Mr. Bush complained that Japan's promises — to buy 20,000 more U.S. cars per year, to double purchases of U.S. auto parts, to relax car inspection standards and

boost sales of other goods — weren't nearly enough.

Some Japanese officials were offended by the very presence of the U.S. executives whom they viewed as trying to give them a hard sell. And Japanese negotiators accused U.S. officials of violating free trade principles by their insistence on sales targets for U.S. goods in Japan.

Within minutes of Mr. Bush's announcement of the details, the automakers voiced their unhappiness. Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca said the agreement "doesn't sound like a lot of cars."

"The bad news is that I think the proposals that are on the table as far as the auto industry is concerned are inadequate," added Harold A. Poling, chairman of Ford Motor Co.

Aboard his plane, Mr. Bush shrugged off the criticism, saying, "maybe some had their sights set a little higher, like trying to have some managed trade, but that's not what we're going to do."

His staff handed reporters aboard the plane supportive statements from the paper industry and the American Electronics Institute saying the results of talks should significantly increase their access to Japanese markets.

Mr. Bush has linked the U.S. recession to Japan's trade practices, which he says restrict imports and therefore cost Americans their jobs.

But as his trade mission neared end Thursday, both he and Mr. Miyazawa emphasised the positive.

In a joint declaration, they said they agreed that "economic issues have assumed new prominence... in the post-cold war era."

And, though Mr. Bush said more remained to be done to balance trade, he also said, "I think we have created jobs... this visit has been a success."

Mr. Miyazawa said, "some friction is inevitable... But as the president said, it was a fruitful summit." He added, "I believe that the meetings that I had with the president marked a concrete first step toward building a new global partnership."

Mr. Bush's decision to bring 18 top U.S. executives along for the trade talks, however, left some Japanese rankled.

Legislator Masao Kunihiro said Mr. Iacocca